SUNDAY MAGAZINE

The fabulous girls

Cheska, Iya and Angel show us what funky female style is all about

ENTERTAINMENT/ F1

'Kubrador' seals

'exclusive five-year' distribution deal with French firm

LIFESTYLE/ D7

Let there be trees

Dappled light, cool breeze are attractions of weekend getaway

ENTERTAINMENT/ G2

Britney Spears

ditches panties as she parties with new best pal Paris Hilton

website: www.inq7.net

'It was like a jumbo jet hovering over us'

By Gerald Gene R. Querubin
Inquirer Southern Luzon

SANTA CRUZ, MARINDUQUE—"IN PITCH DARKness, all we heard was an intense rumbling noise as if a jumbo jet was hovering over our house. Suddenly, our whole roof was ripped apart and blown away."

This was how Edwin Tan, a resident of this typhoon-ravaged province, described yesterday

IT WAS/ A15

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Sunday
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Sunday, December 3, 2006 ★★ 10 sections / Vol. 21 / No.

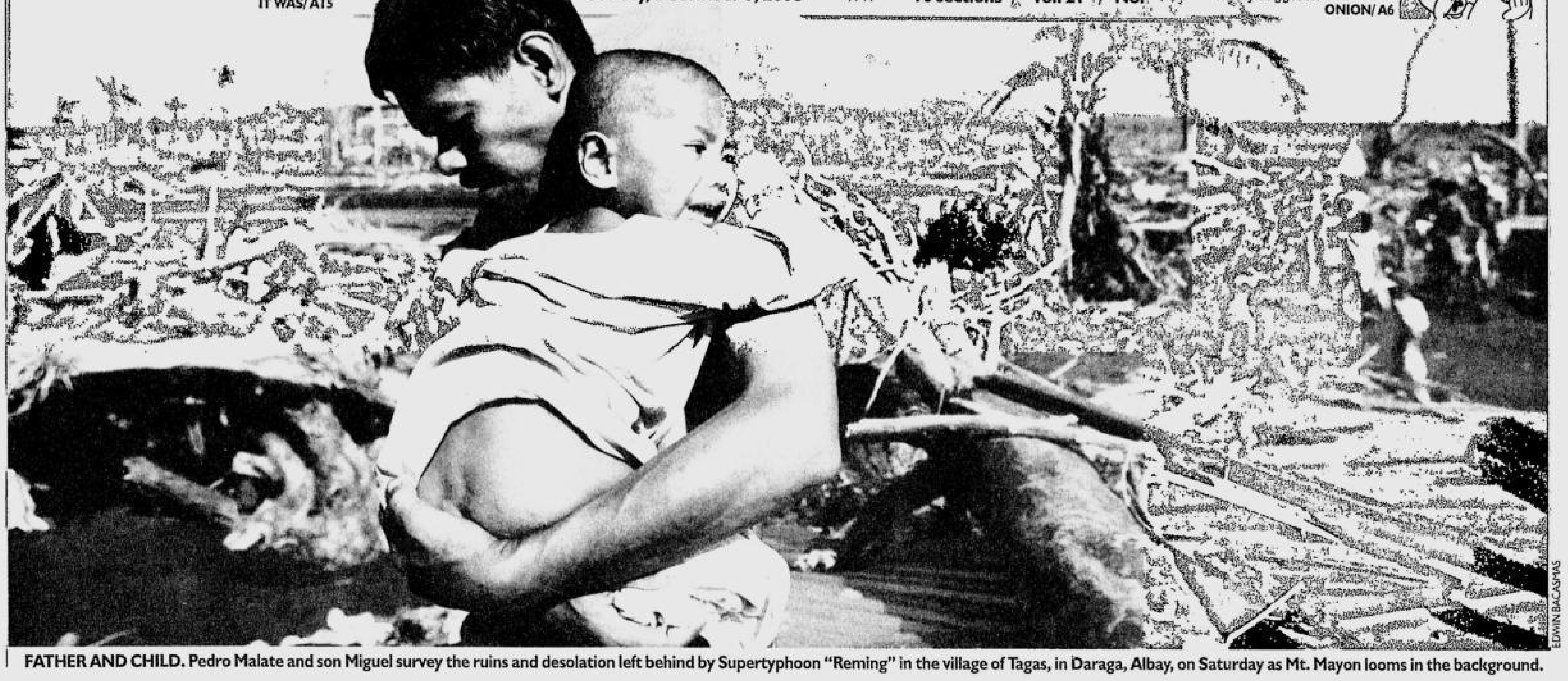
Onion and garlic a day keep the cancer away

A BIT OF ONION AND GARlic a day keeps the cancer away.

People who flavor their diets with plenty of onions and garlic might have lower odds of getting several types of cancer, a new study suggests.

ONION/ A6

LIGTAS KA NGA SA CANCER, PERO TEPOK KAMI SA BAD BREATH MO!



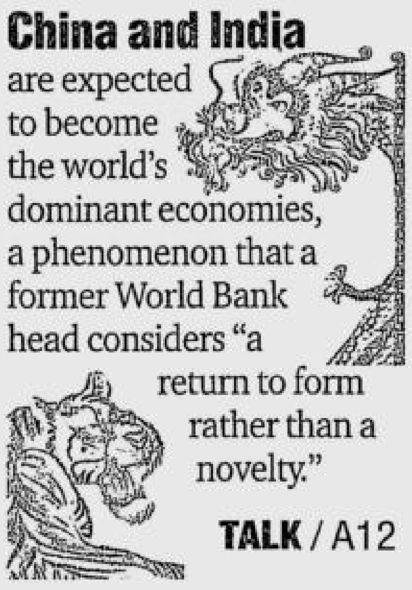
EDWIN BACASMAS

FATHER AND CHILD. Pedro Malate and son Miguel survey the ruins and desolation left behind by Supertyphoon "Reming" in the village of Tagas, in Daraga, Albay, on Saturday as Mt. Mayon looms in the background.

Up to 700 feared dead

WHAT'S INSIDE

China and India



are expected to become the world's dominant economies, a phenomenon that a former World Bank head considers "a return to form rather than a novelty."

TALK / A12

Undefeated boxer
'Boom Boom' Bautista faces Andrade in Florida today

SPORTS / A23

'Nicole' ready
for verdict, even takes gym classes, scans the classifieds

NEWS / A3

UK scientists
investigating the death of Alexander Litvinenko find two more polonium cases in spy probe

WORLD / A20

Mike Arroyo
to undergo heart procedure today

NEWS / A2

Mayon's deadly rampage puzzles local folk, execs

By Tony S. Bergonia and TJ Burgonio

PADANG, LEGAZPI CITY—NO ONE WILL PROBably know for sure how many lives were swallowed up in the torrents of volcanic mud and rocks unleashed by Supertyphoon "Reming" but the man who should know, Sen. and Philippine National Red Cross chief Richard Gordon, said the figure could reach 700.

Survivors of the disaster that struck this village of 1,400 people in Albay say they are certain many of their men, women and children still lie underneath the pile of boulders and volcanic sand that wiped out entire neighborhoods here.

"They're still under there...There are houses under there," said a man, pointing with his lips at what used to be a 2-kilometer stretch of road that debris from Mayon Volcano had obliterated.

Gordon yesterday visited some of the areas ravaged by Reming in its powerful strike at Albay and other provinces in the Bicol region on Thursday.

UP TO/ A15

Dionisio, Molina show promise; others falter

By Teddyvic S. Melendres
Sports Editor

15TH ASIAN GAMES DOHA 2006

DOHA, QATAR—TRAP SHOOTER JETHRO Dionisio and swimmer Miguel Molina provided the only bright notes in an otherwise discordant Philippine debut in the 15th Asian Games here Saturday by finishing among the leaders in the initial phases of their respective events.

Flyweight Violito Payla also became a source of pride for the Filipinos later in the day as he kicked off the country's boxing campaign with an easy 33-13 victory over Omran Akbari of Iran.

The 32-year-old Dionisio shot 23, 19 and 24 for 66 to rank seventh after three of five strings in the individual category of men's trap, just four birds off the pace set by Kuwait's Naser Meqlad, who scored 22-24-24 (70).

Molina, the country's most bemedalled athlete in last year's Southeast Asian Games, expended just enough energy to finish second in heat 1 of the men's 400-meter individual med-

DIONISIO/ A8

'There's a seed of heroism in all of us'

By Fe Zamora

HONG KONG—THE ICON OF FILipino People Power was the keynote speaker at the largest ever gathering of Asian heroes selected by Time Asia in celebration of the 60th year of the magazine's coverage of the region.

Former President Corazon Aquino, in bright red instead of her signature yellow, led 17 of the 60 honorees at an exclusive gala dinner held Wednesday at the ballroom of The Ritz-Carlton in this former British colony.

Aquino was among the four Filipinos honored. The others were Eugenia D. Apostol and Leticia Jimenez-Magsanoc, INQUIRER founding chair and editor in chief, respectively, and world billiards champion Efren "Bata" Reyes.

During the program, Time international editor Michael Elliott said the magazine had covered an array of heroes since it launched its Asian edition 60 years ago.

"It has been our privilege to encounter the most exceptional of them. We have many of them here with us tonight, and it is an honor to acknowledge the role they have played in shaping the Asia of our times," Elliott said.

Aquino, who was thrust into the political limelight following the assassination in August 1983 of her husband, Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., said in her remarks that heroism was "about courageously responding to God's calling."

Aquino noted that heroism was usually bestowed posthumously, and that "heroes" of a political cause often gained the stamp of heroism "immediately, whether they live to enjoy the distinction, or they die, igniting the courage of widows like me and the ordinary folk."

She thanked Time magazine for "reminding us that there is a seed of heroism in all of us."

Time, which covered Ninoy Aquino's fatal homecoming in 1983, also presented his widow with an original print of the photograph used in the magazine's previous covers.

Elliot said the transparencies had been the subject of "a fruitless search" for years, and were miraculously found only recently.

Apostol and Magsanoc were awarded for chronicling, in defiance of the Marcos dictatorship, the protest rallies that followed the Aquino assassination.

The two women jointly accepted their awards, thanking Imelda and Ferdinand Marcos "for making us realize our heroic qualities."

Youk Chang, cited for his relentless investigation of Cambodia's

THERE'S/ A6

ANNIVERSARY ISSUE
TIME

RANDY NAVASERO

CHAMP AND HERO. Billiards superstar Efren "Bata" Reyes raises a fist in triumph in front of the image of former President Corazon Aquino on the cover of Time Asia magazine.

GMA eyes Puno as SC chief

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo has made known to her allies her intention to appoint Supreme Court Associate Justice Reynato Puno as the next Chief Justice, a high official close to her said.

According to the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity for lack of clearance to speak on the subject, Puno's appointment was necessary to ensure the tribunal's support for the Malacañang-backed plan of the House of Representatives to mount a "final push" for Charter change.

The plan is for the House to convene a constituent assembly (Con-ass) on Dec. 6 to approve the shift to a unicameral parliamentary government even without the Senate's participation.

"She (the President) said it would politically be very helpful to her if she appoints Puno," the source told the INQUIRER.

Asked to explain, the source said: "It's just a euphemism for him (Puno) promising to support Cha-cha (Charter change)."

GMA EYES/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

Central and Northern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers becoming frequent over Northeastern Luzon. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY LAW DE GUZMAN, INQUIRER RESEARCH/12/02/06

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Mike A to undergo angioplasty

By Philip C. Tubeza and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FIRST GENTLEMAN JOSE MIGUEL "MIKE" ARroyo will undergo an angioplasty procedure this morning at St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City, according to his legislator-brother.

Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo confirmed earlier reports that his elder brother had a "heart-related problem" but insisted that the First Gentleman's condition was "stable".

"He is OK. He is doing fine. He will have an angioplasty [this] morning," Iggy Arroyo said in a telephone interview.

He said he did not know the specific details of Mike Arroyo's heart condition, beyond saying that his brother had a "little blockage" in one of his arteries.

He said an angioplasty, which involves the mechanical widening of a narrowed or totally obstructed blood vessel, was a safe procedure.

FIRST Gentleman Mike Arroyo

More care

"We've asked the doctors and they said it's 99.5-percent safe, not unlike an ant bite," Arroyo said.

"He could undergo this as an outpatient but, being the First Gentleman, we're taking more care," he added.

Iggy said expert doctors would be handling the operation and that President Macapagal-Arroyo and other members of the First Family would be at the hospital for the operation.

Mike Arroyo checked into St. Luke's on Friday, following a checkup that he and the President underwent last weekend.

Family kept quiet

Until Iggy Arroyo confirmed that doctors had recommended his brother undergo an angioplasty, the family had said nothing about the First Gentleman's condition.

Malacañang officials were reticent about President Arroyo's whereabouts yesterday.

A Palace official, who refused to be named, said the President would stay overnight at the hospital for the First Gentlemen's operation.

At 7:30 p.m. yesterday, Presidential Security Group personnel stationed at St. Luke's, where Mike Arroyo has been confined since Saturday night, claimed they had not been advised about when the President would visit to husband.

No media stakeout

There were no media staking out the hospital unlike during the President's previous hospital visits.

This reporter checked the hospital's back entrance and saw the President's unmarked black Mercedes Benz parked there. Beside it were four black Nissan Patrol SUVs manned by the PSG.

Sources said the President arrived at the hospital at 7:30 p.m. They said she passed through the hospital cafe's back door.

Low-key visits

The President apparently wanted to keep her visits low-key and away from the prying eyes of the media in keeping with the First Family's wish to keep the matter of the First Gentleman's health condition private.

At 7:45 p.m., the President and her convoy left the hospital.

Escaped suspected terror leader arrested

By Alcuin Papa

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE forces have arrested a senior leader of the radical Rajah Sulaiman Movement (RSM) suspected of involvement in the country's worst terrorist attack, a Marine spokesperson said on Saturday.

Marines spokesperson Lt. Col. Ariel Caculitan identified the suspect as Feliciano de los Reyes, who is believed to have participated in the bombing of the Awang Airport in Maguindanao. The RSM, which is believed to have ties to the Abu Sayyaf and the Indonesia-based Jemaah Islamiyah terror network, is also linked to the killing of more than 100 people in a ferry bombing near Manila in 2004.

De los Reyes, who jumped bail after being arrested in Pangasinan in 2002, was captured Thursday evening by joint forces from Marine intelligence, Military Intelligence Group 9 (MIG) and the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) in Barangay Matibay, Lamitan, Basilan.

Citing intelligence information, Caculitan said De los Reyes participated in the Awang Airport bombing in Feb. 20, 2003, in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao, where a car bomb killed one soldier and wounded three civilians. The bombing was said to be a "test mission" for RSM members.

De los Reyes—also known as Ustadz Abubakar, Jorge Castro and Melvin—was reportedly seeking refuge in Lamitan when he was intercepted by security forces. They have yet to establish his role in the Awang Airport.

According to Caculitan, De los Reyes also had a standing arrest warrant from a court in Camiling, Tarlac, for illegal possession of firearms.

De los Reyes was first arrested in a February 2002 raid on a suspected RSM hideout in Barangay Malong, Anda, Pangasinan, along with one of the RSM's suspected founders Hilario "Ahmad" de los Santos and four others. He was imprisoned for six months but jumped bail after posting a P200,000 bail bond.

The RSM, reportedly composed of radical Muslim-converts ("balik Islam"), was founded in the early 1990s by Ahmad Santos and his brother, Tyrone "Dawud" Santos.

Ahmad Santos was rearrested in Zamboanga City in November of 2005 and is now under detention in Taguig.

Dawud was arrested in March 2005 in a raid on a safehouse in Cubao, Quezon City, where explosives and firearms were reportedly recovered. The raid led to another in Fairview, Quezon City, where 600 kilos of ammonium nitrate, a component used in making bombs, and bomb canisters were recovered.

Dawud, however, was able to post bail in April 2005. He remains at large.

The shadowy group is named after Rajah Solaiman, the last Muslim ruler of Manila whose kingdom was destroyed by Spanish colonizers in the 16th century.

With a Reuters report

Cotabato judge slain

COTABATO CITY—UNIDENTIFIED gunmen shot dead a Regional Trial Court judge here at around 4:45 p.m. yesterday.

Senior Supt. Peraco Macacua, Cotabato City police chief, identified the victim as Judge Sahara Silongan of RTC Branch 15. He was unable to provide a motive for the shooting.

Police investigators said Silongan was driving his Isuzu van with his wife in the front seat when gunmen on a motorcycle opened fire at the judge.

Silongan sustained gunshot wounds in the chest, but still managed to drive his car to Notre Dame Hospital, some 1.5 kilometers from the ambush site.

Doctors pronounced the judge dead minutes later.

His wife, who sustained a minor gunshot wound, is confined at the hospital. *Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

Burma chief will be absent from Cebu

BURMA'S (MYANMAR) MILITARY leader will not attend the annual summit of Southeast Asian countries later this month because he is focusing on drafting a new constitution, an official of the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

General Than Shwe would send Prime Minister Soe Win to represent him at the gathering on Dec. 11 in Cebu, according to a letter sent the host country, which this year is the Philippines, said the official, who declined to be named because he was not authorized to speak.

Key players in the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), a grouping known for its emphasis on consensus and noninterference in domestic affairs, have shown rare displeasure in recent years at the slow pace of reform in Burma.

Than Shwe, who heads Burma's ruling junta, missed last year's Asean summit, which was chaired by Malaysia, one of his harshest critics.

Burma's military rulers, under international pressure about their repressive regime, resumed long drawn-out talks on a new constitution in October.

A charter is the first stage in Burma's seven-step "road map to democracy" but the junta refuses to set a timetable for the "road map" announced in 2003.

Military generals have ruled Burma since 1962 and refuse to accept the 1990 election victory of a democratic party led by Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi who is kept under house arrest.

Besides Burma and the Philippines, Asean includes Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Reuters

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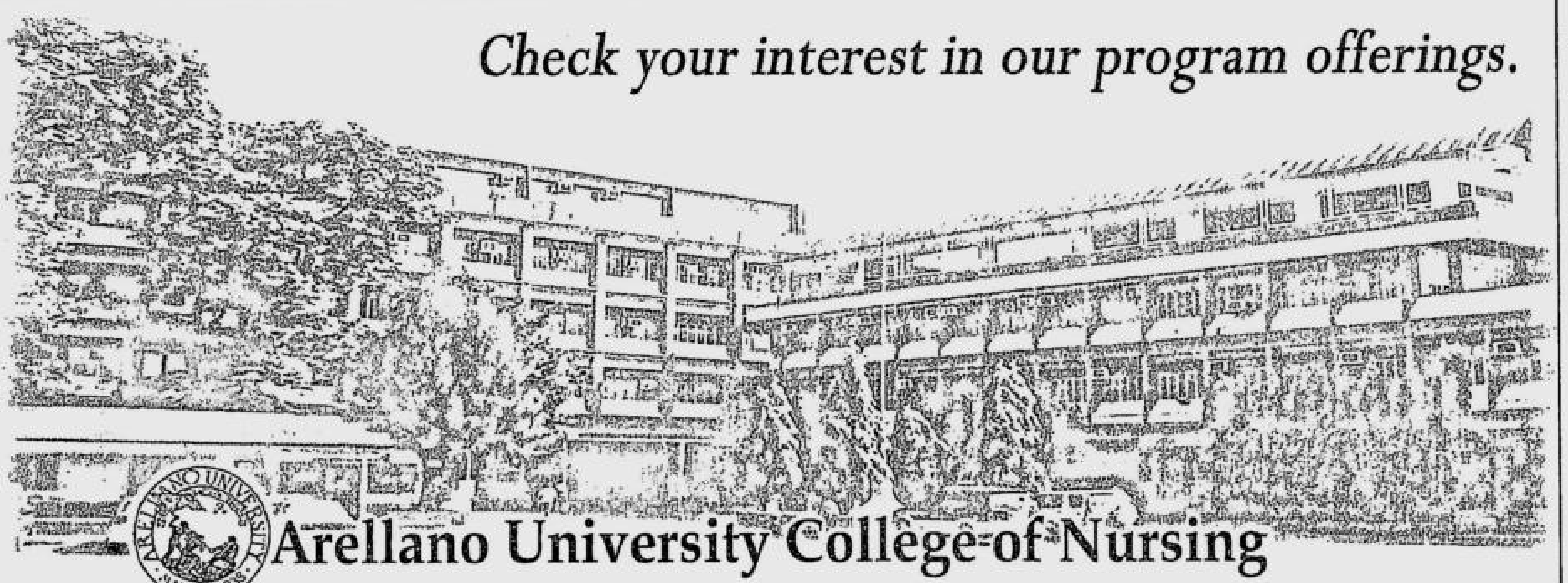

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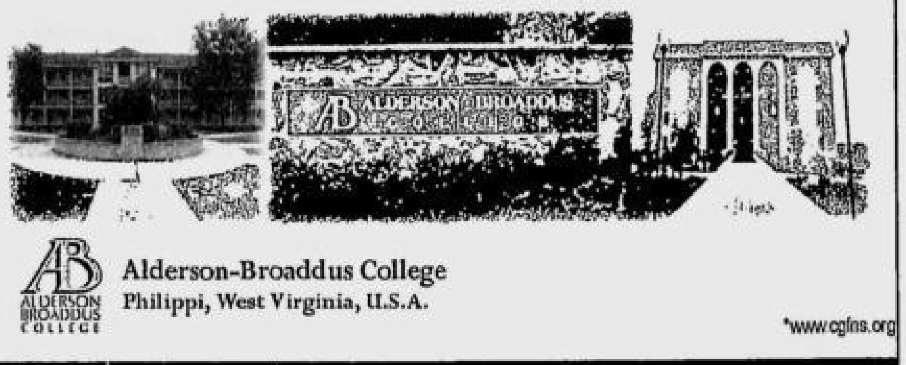

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*www.cgfns.org

For inquiries, you may contact Angelo Herrera at 736-9450, 0906-4934633 and 0921-4811586

Malacañang welcomes Meralco sale

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG HAS WELCOMED WITH open arms the plan by the Lopez family to dispose of its holdings in Manila Electric Co., the country's biggest power retailer.

"We welcome their openness to consider whatever is best, not only for Meralco, but for the consumers as well," said Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla in an interview with the INQUIRER. "If it is indicative of their openness to explore whatever is best to have a competitive market, why not?"

Oscar Lopez, chair of the family's business empire which covers power generation, water utility, toll road operations, telecommunications and media hinted during a forum that his group would consider selling its Meralco shares—if the price was right.

Lotilla said that he would clarify with Lopez himself what he meant in media accounts of his plan to divest of the Lopez holdings in Meralco—long considered the family's crown jewel. The family took control of the utility firm from the Americans in 1965.

"If that is their offer then it is worth seriously looking into," Lotilla said.

The Lopezes and their subsidiaries and partners, specifically Spanish-based utility Union Fenosa, control roughly a third of Meralco while the government has a 15.3 percent interest, including the shares of state financial institutions.

Lotilla noted that combining the government and the Lopezes' shares in Meralco would allow the state to get a premium on the shares.

The Lopez-controlled management of Meralco has blamed the Arroyo administration's refusal to grant the utility firm's power rate hike to reflect current market conditions for its poor financial performance in the past year, specifically the P30 billion court-ordered refund to consumers.

The government, in turn, has seen Meralco as a major stumbling block to its power sector reforms with its monopoly over the biggest power market in the Philippines, turning off potential bidders for the power generation and transmission facilities that the state wants to privatize.

'Nicole' ready for verdict, even takes gym classes, scans the classifieds

By Volt Contreras and Armand Nocum

SHE HAS BEEN SCANNING THE CLASSIFIEDS lately and has actually received at least one job offer from a company vice president. She has also enrolled in a gym, hoping to lose some pounds for good.

But all these plans and efforts at regaining a "normal life" may depend on what happens on Monday, says the woman the country has come to know only as "Nicole."

Two days before the verdict is to be handed down in the Subic rape case, the 23-year-old who claims she was abused, then "dumped like a pig" by four US Marines, spoke with hardly any hint of distress when reached by phone yesterday.

During the interview, she raised her voice from time to time, not because of the rage that marked her previous statements to the press, but because of the noise inside the mall where she was spending the afternoon with a companion.

Her mood may have been partly explained by what she did earlier that day. She said she had just returned from Tagaytay to meet with the nun who had facilitated her "one-week retreat" in that resort city last month.

"I used to say this with some difficulty before, but now I can really feel that I'm ready [for the court decision]. *Maluwag na sa kalooban ko* [My feelings have eased]," she said.

"The judgment does not end here. God knows I told the truth," she said in Filipino.

"God is our most powerful judge," she added.

Nicole said the retreat gave her time to reflect in the company of several nuns and a bishop, and away from the world—her family, her lawyer and the mostly female activist-supporters who attended her court hearings and press conferences.

Though she said at first that she had not really thought about what she would do with her life after the verdict comes out, she eventually owned up to having looked at the classified ads and "jobstreet.com."

An opportunity to "work abroad" would be welcome, too, at this point, she said.

Nicole is a graduate of management accounting and was running the family-owned canteen in Zamboanga City when she took that holiday in November 2005 at the Subic Freeport where the alleged rape took place.

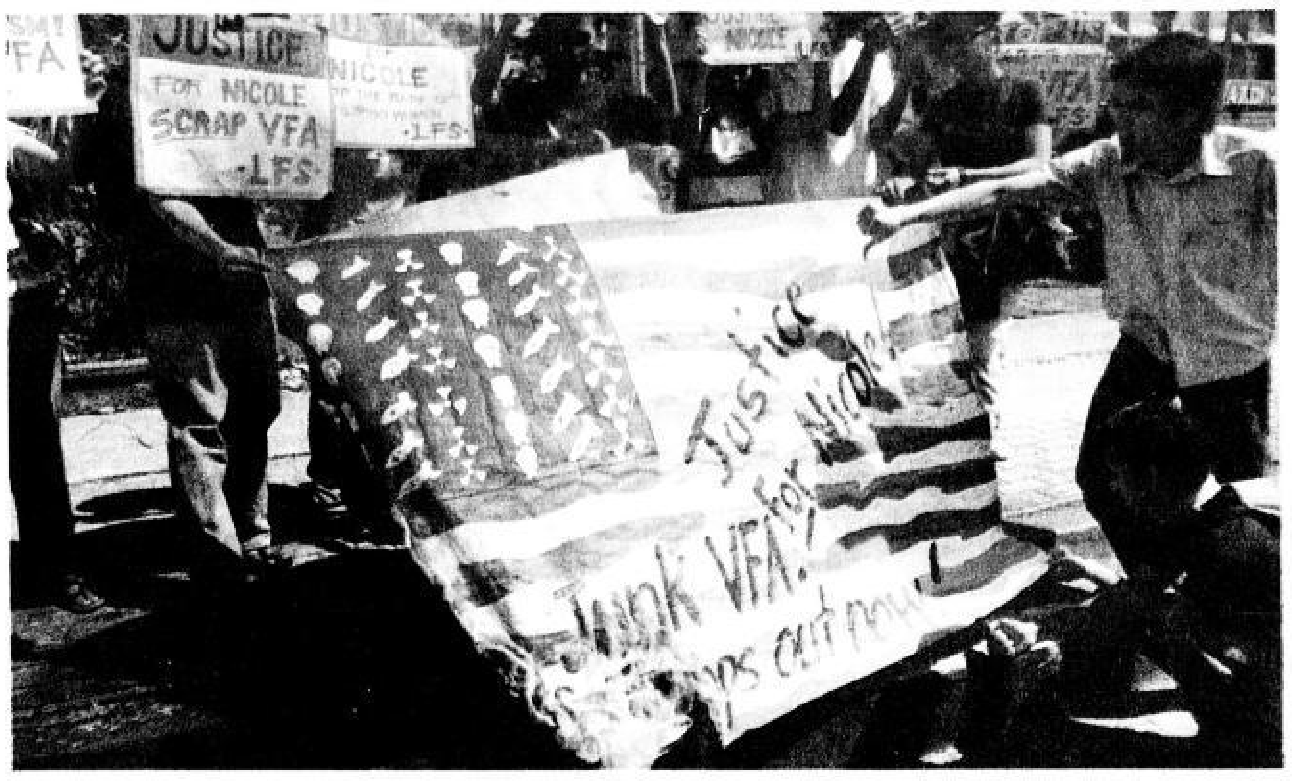
She said she would definitely attend the promulgation of the verdict at 1 p.m. tomorrow in Makati by Judge Benjamin Pozon.

Meanwhile, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday advised Nicole to accept the verdict in the case even as he foresaw another legal and diplomatic battle over the issue of detention should the accused US Marines be convicted.

In a telephone interview, Gonzalez said that although the law provides that the US servicemen be immediately sent to a regular detention facility following a conviction, the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) states that they may remain in US custody if they decide to appeal the verdict before higher courts.

"The leftist and progressives will demand that the Americans be jailed in our own prisons ... but the VFA says that during the period of appeal and until the end of the judicial proceedings, the US will take custody of the accused," Gonzalez said.

The Philippine and US governments differed last year on the issue of the custody of accused US Marines Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier, Lance Cpl. Keith Silkwood and Lance Cpl. Dominic Duplantis.



STUDENT activists stage a rally before the US Embassy to demand justice for rape victim "Nicole," ahead of the promulgation of the verdict in the case against the four accused US Marines on Monday. ROMY HOMILLADA

RP kids suffer with exodus of health workers

THE EXODUS OF NURSES AND DOCTORS for better-paying jobs abroad may be endangering the health of Filipino children.

According to Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan of the Health Futures Foundation, since 2004, 75 of 79 provinces have been losing their nurses, 77 provinces their midwives, and 61 provinces have reported shortages of doctors.

The large out-migration of health workers from rural to urban areas and abroad has manifested itself in the decline in basic health services for children, the former health secretary said.

"This is unfortunate as children need expert care in the first few weeks and months of their existence to ensure their proper growth," he said.

Tan presented a paper on the country's efforts to reduce infant and child mortality rates before a gathering of health experts and professionals the other day.

The presentation was part of a three-day review of the country's progress in achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of the United Nations that include reducing child mortality, improving maternal health care and combating infectious diseases.

UN member-countries have pledged to eradicate poverty by 2015 through the eight MDGs that they drafted in 2000.

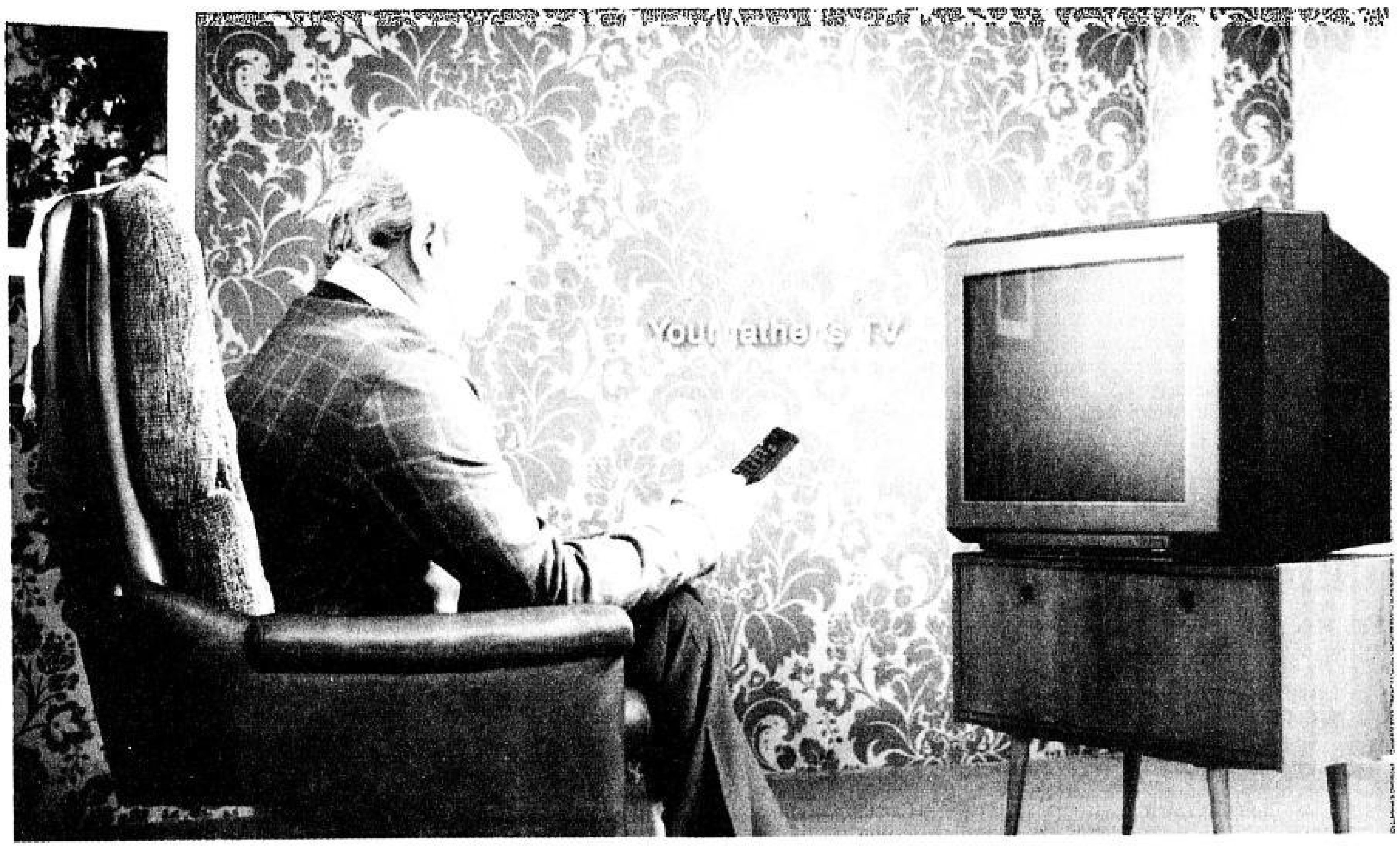
In his paper, Tan said a reduction in the Philippines' child mortality rate was one of the MDGs that "remains in peril."

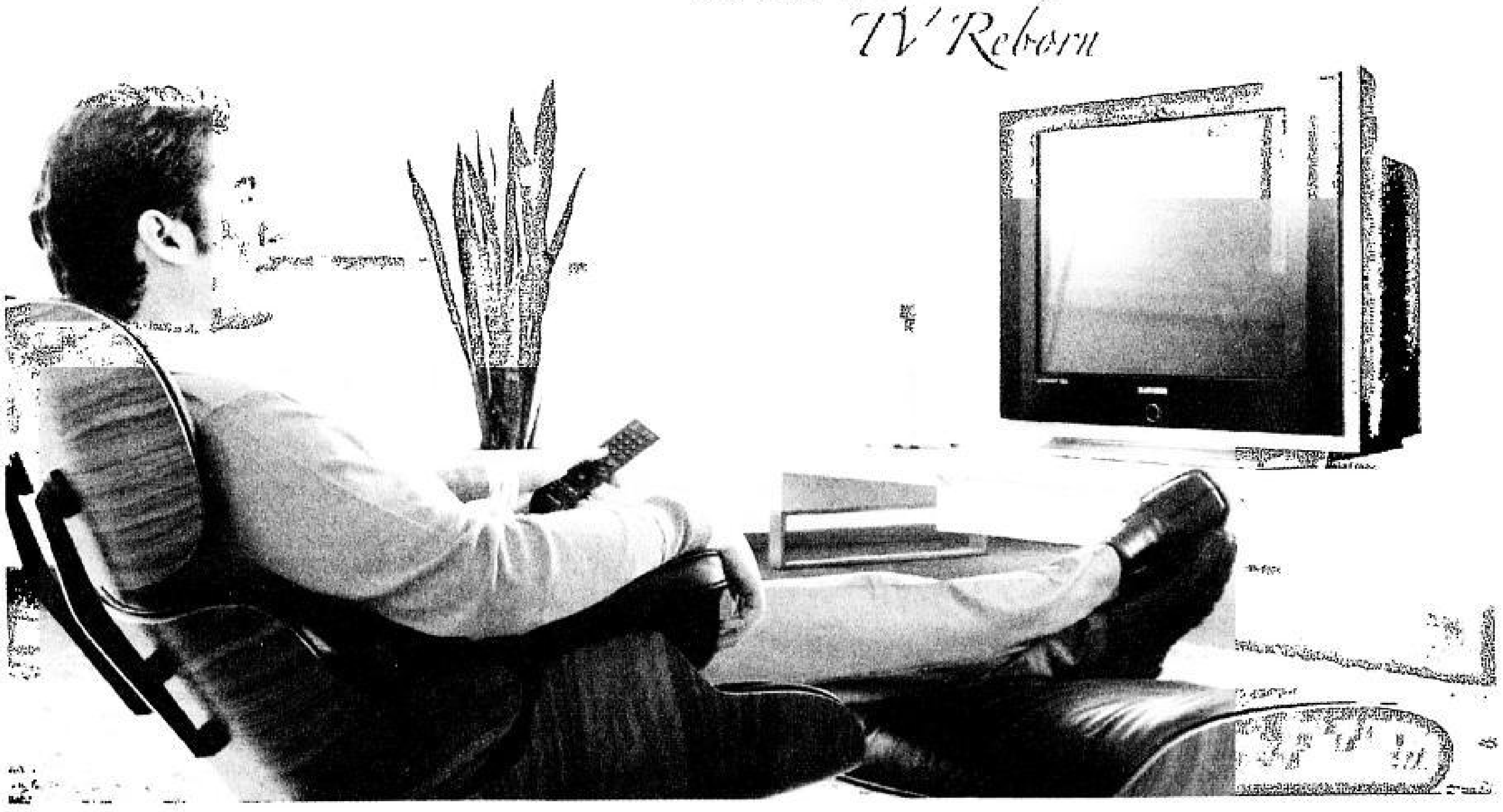
He noted that despite advancements in technology, there have been "no substantive improvements" in the country's infant and child death rates in the past few years.

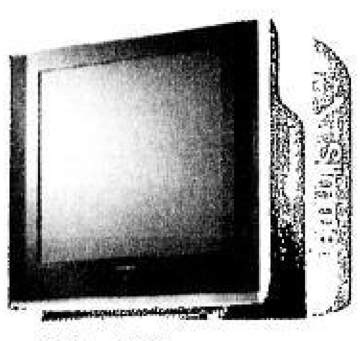
"There has been a slight decrease. But compared to neighboring countries like Malaysia and Thailand, the decrease is very slow," Tan said.

He said the desire to search for greener pastures abroad as well as the low government budget for health services could be some of the factors contributing to the exodus of Filipino health workers.

He recommended that, apart from persuading health workers stay in the country, the government should also restore funding for health services to five percent of the national budget, a proposal endorsed by other speakers at the event organized by the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD). *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*







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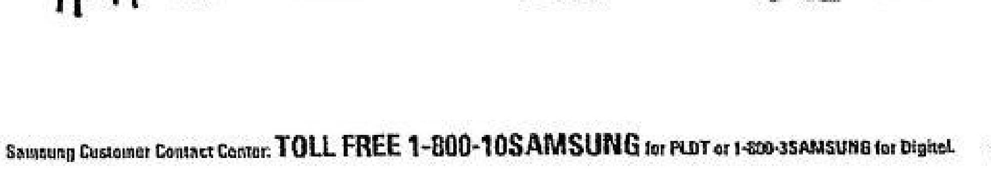

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SAMSUNG

More violent weather on way, says Greenpeace; Pagasa to buy more radar

HOW CAN FILIPINOS BETTER deal with typhoons?

Various experts, lamenting the loss of lives and extensive devastation wrought by the series of supertyphoons that have hit the country this year, stress the need for more disaster information, upgrading of forecasting technology and preparedness.

"The country would need a big umbrella," quipped Anthony Golez, deputy chief of the National Disaster Coordinating Council. "Figuratively, that umbrella is the knowledge that we should instill in our people—knowing about disaster preparedness."

Golez said Filipinos should be "bombarded" with disaster information. "We have to give them the reality, and it's a sad reality. We have to tell them the truth."

The truth, according to the international environmentalist group Greenpeace is that more violent weather events could be expected as a dire consequence of continuing climate change.

Wake-up call

The massive destruction caused by the supertyphoons "should serve as a wake-up call about the need for governments to find ways to avert or mitigate the catastrophic impacts of extreme weather events which scientists predict could become more severe because of climate change," Abigail Jabines, climate and energy campaigner for Greenpeace Southeast Asia, said in a statement furnished the INQUIRER.

"Scientists say that as global temperatures rise, the intensity of extreme weather events is likely to increase, and it is possible that in the future the impact of these events will become even greater," Jabines said.

Better radars

But there is some good news regarding improved forecasting technology for the country.

Graciano Yumul, undersecretary of the Department of Science and Technology, said in a press forum on Saturday that there are plans afoot to equip the country's weather bureau with radar that will tell how much rain will fall in a particular area in the next four hours.

At present, the Pagasa radar can only detect the strength and location of weather disturbances as they approach the archipelago, Yumul said at the weekly Kapihan sa Sulo news forum.

Yumul said two Doppler radars, costing some P100 million each, are already in the bidding process.

"If we can install these radars, we'll have more accurate warnings. We can predict how much rain will fall in a particular area and we'll easily know if there'll be a landslide, flashfloods or floods," he added.

Now-casting

Nathaniel Cruz, Pagasa weather branch chief, is excited about the new radars: "Four hours will be enough to warn the public. This is not forecasting but now-casting," he added in an interview.

Cruz said the Doppler radars will be useful even when there is no weather disturbance but rains result from existing weather systems such as the monsoons.

"For instance, at 4 a.m. when school children are preparing to go to school and there are already some amount of rain falling in Metro Manila. We can tell the (Department of Education) that the drizzle will become a heavy downpour around 7 a.m. or 8 a.m. and they can decide accordingly (whether to cancel classes) based on that information," Cruz said.

Yumul said the first two Doppler radars will be stationed in Subic, Zambales and Tagaytay City to serve as "Metro Manila's shield." It can also warn nearby provinces of rainfall and how much precipitation there will be.

Norman Bordadora, Delfin T. Mallari, AP

HOMES FOR BULAKEÑOS

(From left) Jun Valvuena, Club Bulakeño president Boni Vergel de Dios, Cibac partylist member Kim Bernardo, Angat Mayor Narding de Leon and Br. Mon de Leon attend the symbolic Gawad Kalinga deed of donation signing and ground-breaking ceremonies yesterday at Barangay Encanto, Angat, Bulacan.

RODEL ROTONI

Lucena City folk pick up pieces, make most of what 'Reming' left

By Delfin Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—AMID FALLEN trees, scattered leaves and other debris strewn about by Typhoon "Reming," residents of this city resumed their daily grind after the sun peeked out from behind the still-dark clouds early Friday morning.

Restituto Agbaya, in his late 60s, began wheeling his steel cart around and picking up plastic containers and bottles around Perez Park here.

"There is plenty of [salable] junk and useful litter after every typhoon. I started my rounds early to avoid competition," Agbaya told the INQUIRER in Filipino as he stooped to retrieve mineral water bottles which he sells for P12 a kilo at a neighborhood junk shop.

He confided to the INQUIRER: "Most of this plastic junk [is] uncollected because government trash collectors are apparently too lazy to collect them after a typhoon."

He said that after Typhoon Milenyo, he collected nearly two sackfuls of plastic which netted him more than P150.

"But I could not earn that much after the typhoon last night. It left at once," he said, "but it was good [because] there was less destruction."

Three young men were spotted sawing the fallen branches of the ornamental trees around the park.

"Once dried, these [branches] will serve as fire wood that could last us for a week," said Ronnie Mabanta, a jobless father of one who lived in a nearby train station.

He and his friends tied the wood in bundles.

They then pointed to a huge tree with lots of branches lying on the street. "Once we chop those branches, we can sell some bundles to buy us a bottle of gin this evening," Ronnie said exchanging high-fives with his buddies.

"In the process, we will be helping the government and the motorists by removing the tree parts that are blocking the road," said his companion.

Typhoon topples 146 steel Transco towers in Bicol region

By Abigail L. Ho
and Bobby Q. Labalan
Inquirer Southern Luzon

SUPERTYPHOON "REMING" HAS downed 146 steel towers in the Bicol Region, according to the National Transmission Corp. (Transco).

A Transco official said yesterday such was the fury of the typhoon that 81 of the steel towers were toppled and the other 65 were broken in half. It added that Reming also felled around 300 wooden poles in the region.

"The damage alone cost around P2 billion, excluding the damage wrought by past Typhoon 'Milenyo' estimated at P485 million and the cost of the emergency works," Transco vice president for Luzon operations and maintenance Guillermo Redoblado said.

He said it would take at least three weeks to complete the emergency work but assured the public that power would be restored before Christmas Day.

Transco said the hardest-hit province in Bicol was Camarines Sur, where 32 towers were toppled. Transco's Naga-Labo, Naga-Daraga and Naga-Tiwi transmission lines also sustained the heaviest damage.

The damaged steel towers, transmission lines and wooden poles were on top of those damaged during Typhoon Milenyo, which wrought havoc in Metro Manila and Southern Luzon in late September.

Redoblado said the state firm's engineers and line crews were now working round the clock to link Transco's Naga substation in Camarines Sur to the Luzon grid via the Tayabas substation in efforts to restore power.

This should be accomplished by Wednesday, he said, bringing power to Naga.

After connecting the Naga substation to the Luzon grid, the Daraga substation in Albay would be connected next, he said. That should be completed by Dec. 16, at which time power would be fully restored, he said.

To temporarily replace the damaged steel towers, Transco will deploy emergency restoration systems (ERS), or lightweight mini-towers that can be built within two to three days.

A steel tower takes around six months to put in place.

To enable it to accelerate the repairs of its damaged towers and lines, Transco appealed to host communities to help protect the facilities from looters.

A Transco helicopter survey Friday caught on video some men attempting to cut and steal electric cables from one of the steel towers.

Transco president Arthur Aguilar said that right now, he said almost the entire Luzon grid was running on temporary poles in the aftermath of the two supertyphoons.

"The actual towers were rated for 270-kilometers-per-hour winds. The temporary poles that we have now can withstand 180-kph wind speeds. These can't endure strong typhoons, so we really have to put in place the permanent replacements as soon as possible, before the typhoon season strikes," he said.

Transco said power had been restored in Laguna, Batangas and Cavite after all 69-kilovolt subtransmission lines in the area were repaired and energized yesterday afternoon.

PAL'S NEW BABY. Philippine Airlines, implementing a stepped-up modernization and expansion program, welcomes its latest Airbus A319, which arrived from the Airbus production facility in Hamburg, Germany. The jet is the third of 20 brand-new aircraft to join the PAL fleet in the last three months. Inset photo shows Captains James Conner, Butch Juinio, Arnie Mangubat, Eric Isaac, Biboy Rodriguez and First Officer Chad Bacalso with PAL assistant Vice President Cesar Chiong inside the A319's Mabuhay Class section.

Corrections

In the Nov. 29 issue, a Page A2 story—"Max Soliven's remains arrive"—mistakenly referred to a certain Jose Rodriguez as the former Spanish ambassador to the Philippines. Jose Rodriguez, who was at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport for the arrival of the remains of Max Soliven, is a friend of the deceased—not the former ambassador.

***

In yesterday's issue, a front-page article—"Victoria Quirino-Delgado, teenage first lady, dies; 75"—misstated that the Francisco "Paco" Delgado, the second husband of the late Victorina "Vicky" Quirino, is a former ambassador to the Vatican. The former ambassador to the Vatican is Antonio Delgado—not Francisco Delgado.

***

The same article erroneously stated that Quirino-Delgado's 18th birthday celebration in 1949 was the first debut in Malacañang. Hers was only the second; the first was that of Maria Aurora Quezon, the eldest daughter of President Manuel Quezon, in 1937.

***

Neither was Quirino-Delgado's wedding reception the first at the Palace. There were many before hers, such as that of Nena Vargas, the daughter of Quezon's Executive Secretary Jorge B. Vargas, in 1938. But Qurino-Delgado's was the first wedding to be held in Malacañang for a President's daughter. Quirino-Delgado was also uniquely the only First Lady to have her debut and wedding at the Palace.

***

In the same issue, a Page A19 article in the Metro section— "Troubled policemen to get peer counseling"—misidentified the cop who died after trying to save his direct superior from an angry colleague. It was Senior Inspector Winnie Temprosa - not Chief Supt. Federico Damatac - who died after covering a grenade dropped by Chief Insp. Renato Poscablo. Damatac, along with three other police officers and a waiter, was merely wounded. The same report also mistakenly referred to Damatac as Samatac. Our apologies.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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RP wins 6 earth-saving awards in UK

By Volt Contreras

SIX OUT OF 13 GREEN APPLE ENVIRONMENT Awards this year for the best Earth-saving practices in the world went to groups or projects in the Philippines, the embassy in London reported yesterday.

The awards, considered among the highest honors in environmental advocacy, are organized by the Green Organization, an independent, nonpolitical and nonprofit ecology group based in the United Kingdom.

The winners from the Philippines included the Save the Mangrove Association of Kalibo, Aklan, adjudged the Green Champion of Year; the Ecosystems and Research Development Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, which took the Gold Award;

The local government of Negros Occidental and the Leyte Agricultural Corp., which both received the Silver Awards; the Bugang River Tour project of Pandan, Antique, and Pilipinas Shell.

"The awards highlighted the international standards of our efforts in the Philippines to protect the environment," said Ambassador Edgardo Espiritu in a report to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The awards were given during ceremonies on Nov. 20 at the House of Commons, the lower house of the British Parliament, in London. They were co-sponsored by Secretary of State for Health and Member of Parliament Patricia Hewitt.

The other awardees came from France, Jordan, Brazil, Egypt and Trinidad & Tobago. The winners were chosen from some 1,000 entries this year.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, December 3, 2006
1st Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16

The shoot of righteousness

The Lord says, "The days are coming when I shall fulfill the promise that I made in favor of Israel and Judah.

"In those days and at that time I will cause to sprout the shoot of righteousness from David's line; he will practice justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will experience salvation and Jerusalem will live in safety. He will be called Yahweh-Our-Righteousness."

2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2

Coming of Jesus

May the Lord increase more and more your love for each other and for all people, as he increases our love for you. May he strengthen you internally to be holy and blameless before God, our Father, on the day that Jesus, our Lord, will come with all his saints.

For the rest, brothers, we ask you in the name of Jesus, the Lord, and we urge you to live in a way that pleases God, just as you have learned from us. This you do, but try to do still more. You know the instructions we gave you on behalf of the Lord Jesus.

Gospel: Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

Watch and pray

Jesus said, "Then there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth anguish of perplexed nations when they hear the roaring of the sea and its waves. People will faint with fear at the mere thought of what is to come upon the world, for the forces of the universe will be shaken. And at this time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

"Now, when you see the first events, stand erect and lift up your heads, for your deliverance is drawing near."

"Be on your guard; let not your hearts be weighed down with a life of pleasure, drunkenness and worldly cares, lest that day catch you suddenly as a trap. For it will come upon all the inhabitants of the whole earth. But watch at all times and pray, that you may be able to escape all that is bound to happen and to stand before the Son of Man."

Commentary

The day of Justice is coming. This is God's justice, the only kind that brings security. This is God's promise. Paul's prayer for his people is that they increase and overflow with love for one another, blameless and holy until God comes. When will God come? When will the promise be reality? There will be signs but when the Son of Man comes we must stand up straight, knowing this is our ransom. Until then, prayer, attentiveness and obedience to God is the only thing we are exhorted to cling to, together. Advent is for practicing—standing for the Son of Man, God's justice coming upon us.

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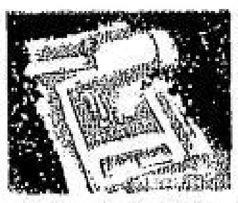

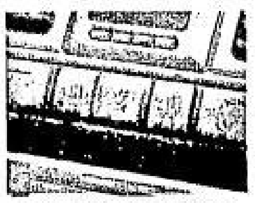

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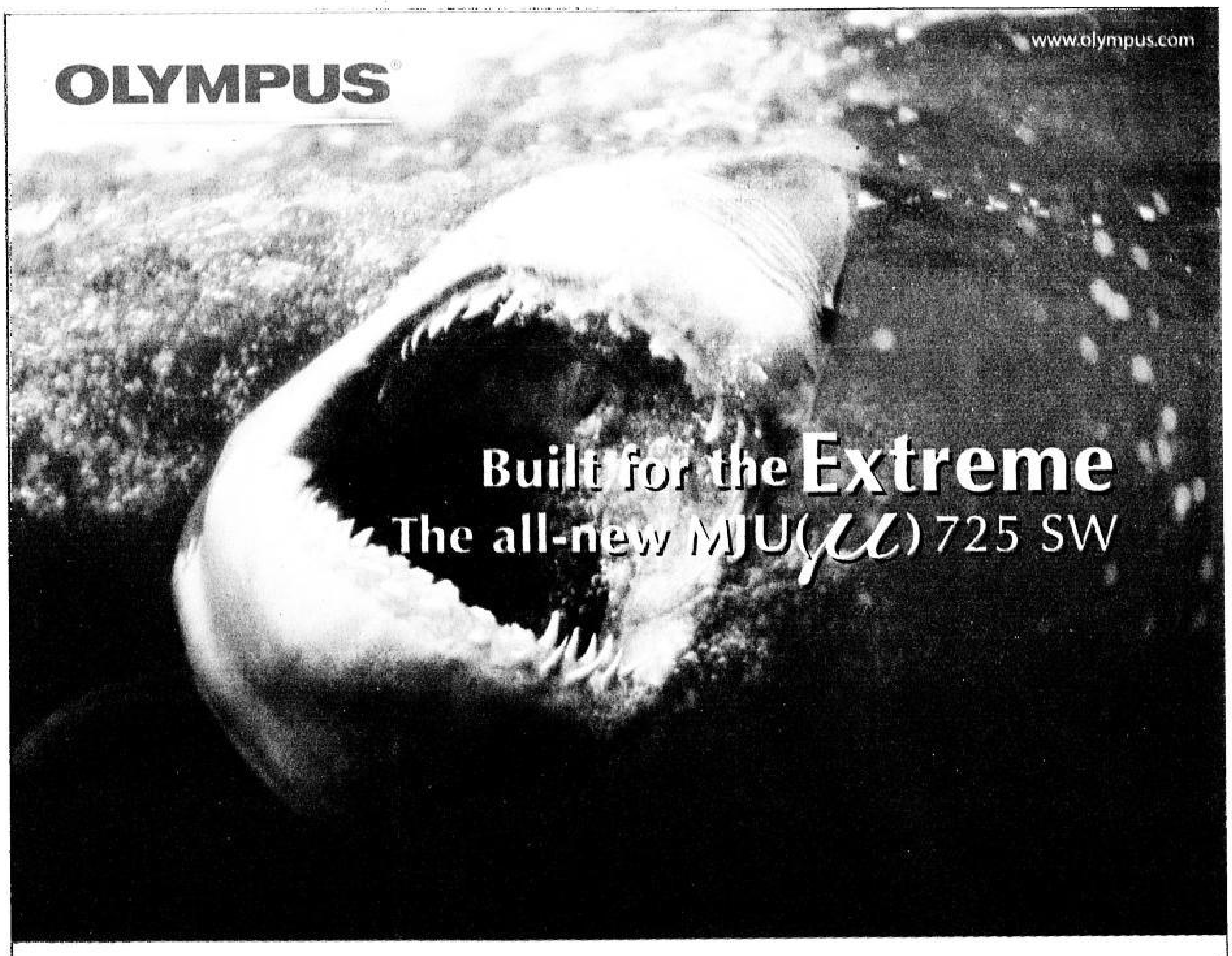

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The Eyes Of OLYMPUS

Efren 'Bata' on being Asian hero: Why me?

By Fe Zamora

HONG KONG—"WHY ME?" ASKED Efren "Bata" Reyes.

With that simple question, the Filipino hailed as the world's greatest pool player won even more hearts and admiration from among Asia's "people of consequence" assembled at The Ritz-Carlton ballroom on Wednesday.

The gathering was part of the 60th-anniversary celebration of Time Asia, which marked the occasion by honoring 60 Asian heroes, among them Reyes.

"Why me? I have not done anything that made any impact on Asian life," a nervous Reyes said in Filipino. In fact, he said, "I am just a simple man making a living from what I do best— playing billiards."

(The "simple man" however, became one of the most sought-after awardees that night, suppressing his trademark toothless smile as he posed with Asia's captains of industry, leading journalists and pretty girls in designer gowns.)

Dapper in the green suit he got when he was inducted to the game's Hall of Fame, Reyes said the honor had come as a big surprise.

"I can only conclude that this is because the sport of billiards has risen to great heights in popularity and acceptance and is now featured live on prime time in sports television channels the world over," he said.

In Time Asia's estimation, Reyes has succeeded in pushing billiards to the level of the world's best-watched sports, and himself as among the astonishing Asian personalities in sports and athletics.

He shared the honor with the late martial artist and actor Bruce Lee, squash player Jahangir Khan of Pakistan, badminton champion Rudy Hartono of Indonesia, celebrated baseball player Sadaharu Oh of Japan, and sports leader Mou Zuoyun of China.

Lucky 13

According to Time magazine, Reyes' achievements in billiards also dramatized the uncanny ability of a Filipino "to parlay hard work, skill and guile into fame, fortune and respect."

Born on Aug. 26, 1954, to a barber and a market vendor, Reyes learned the sport while living with an uncle who ran the Lucky 13 billiard hall in Santa Cruz, Manila.

He said he sometimes slept on the pool table at Lucky 13 "so I could practice more often."

Reyes soon drew attention with his natural talent, and in 1987, during a tournament in Texas, he dazzled. For pulling off extraordinary shots never before seen in the game, he has been dubbed by sports journalists and game aficionados as "The Magician."

Since then, he has won practically all billiards tournaments, including the world pool championship in Cardiff, England in 1999.

Still not a rich man

But for all that, a wealthy man Reyes is not.

"I have so many relatives and friends who are always in need," he told the INQUIRER at the hotel coffee shop.

Not that all those needy friends have discouraged him from playing—and winning some more.

"I want to win in the Olympics. I hope they include billiards," he said.

HAILED AS HEROES of Asia, INQUIRER founding chair Eugenia Apostol, billiards champion Efren "Bata" Reyes, former President Corazon Aquino and INQUIRER editor in chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc share a light moment during the Time Asia awards ceremonies in Hong Kong. MANDY NAVASERO

'There's a seed of heroism in all of us'

From page A1

killing fields, elicited laughter when he said he had thought the award was "scam mail."

A boyish-looking 45-year-old who had lost a sister, a brother-in-law and two nieces to the Khmer Rouge, Chang said that "without accountability," Cambodia would remain dysfunctional and unable to move on.

Mechai Viravaidya, known as Thailand's "Condom King," brought the house down with his banter on the "other basic need, which is sex."

He said his campaign for safe sex by distributing condoms for free had confused many Thais: "They thought I was evil, then they realized I was just crazy."

He also announced his next project—a cops and robbers program.

Viravaidya ended his speech by unfurling what he hoped would be used as the official T-shirt of the next Olympics. It showed a print of five rings—actually a drawing of five blown-up condoms.

Tobacco control

Judith Mackay, an advocate of tobacco control, said she had been vilified and threatened for her work.

Witty and quick to laugh, Mackay told the INQUIRER that she had been to Manila doing what she did best—campaigning against smoking.

A speech by Momufuko Ando, which was read by Ken Sasahara, director and general manager of Nissin Foods (International Division), chronicled the life and times of the Japanese entrepreneur behind instant noodles—the miracle food that has powered Asia's economic miracle since the 1950s.

Now 96, Ando said he played golf twice a week and, as he had been doing since 1958, ate a bowl of instant chicken ramen daily.

Scientists Guan Yi and Malik Peiris said they were surprised to be honored because Asian scientists were like a "rare species."

Guan was the first to chart the many strains of bird flu, and Peiris discovered the cause of SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome). Both are based at the University of Hong Kong.

Other honorees

The other awardees present, or who sent a representative, were:

- Narayana Murthy, who launched the economic revolution through outsourcing from his bed-sitter in Bombay.
- Akio Morita and Masaru Ibuka (represented by Yasuo Maruyama, Sony-Hong Kong managing director), naval officer and electronics engineer, respectively, who have been friends and partners for 40 years, and who founded and made Sony Corp. a symbol of Japan's postwar rebirth.
- Chung Ju Yung (represented by grandson Chung Eui-sun, president of Kia Motors), whose iron will and just-do-it spirit propelled South Korea's industrial rise.
- Kang Chol Hwan, a survivor of a prison camp who exposed the horrors of Kim Jong-Il's regime.
- Stan Shih, an engineer who founded Acer and made Taiwan a PC-manufacturing powerhouse.
- King Bhumibol Adulyadej (represented by Thai Consul General Vichai Varasirikul), the beloved and respected monarch who has used his moral authority to guide Thailand through many crises.

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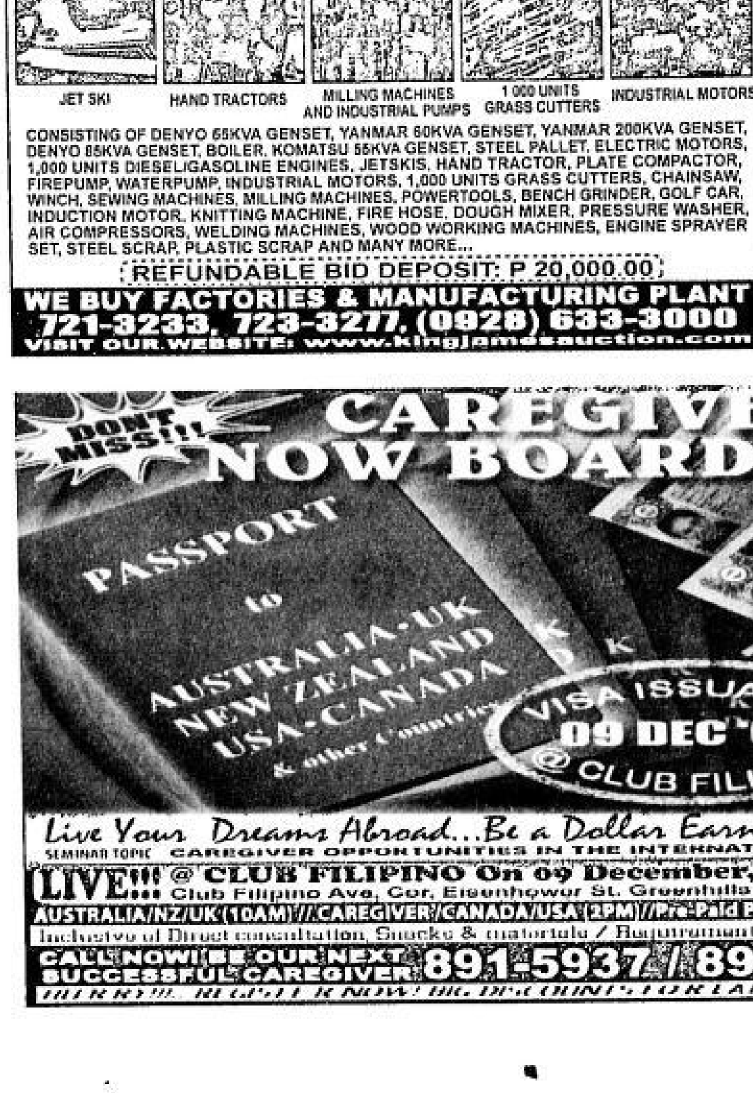

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GMA eyes Puno as SC Chief Justice

From page A1

The Senate is poised to challenge the House-only Con-ass before the high court, which earlier threw out the Palace-backed petition for a people's initiative to amend the Constitution.

Hitch in shortlist

Puno, the most senior of the incumbent justices, voted in favor of the people's initiative in 1997 and for the recent petition of Sigaw ng Bayan and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines.

The high court dismissed the people's initiative as a "gigantic fraud" by a vote of 8-7, with Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban casting the tie-breaking vote.

Puno, Associate Justices Leonardo Quisumbing, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez and Antonio Carpio, and administration ally Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago are vying for the post that Panganiban will vacate when he retires on his 70th birthday on Dec. 7.

The five justices, however, refused to submit to public interviews by the Judicial and Bar Council last week, providing a hitch to the early submission of a shortlist of at least three candidates to Ms Arroyo.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo with Justice Reynato Puno in this April 2006 photo.

The post of Chief Justice was supposedly promised by the President to Santiago, who had said she wanted to make history by becoming the country's first woman Chief Justice and the first court outsider to hold the post.

But Santiago, whose current Senate term runs up to 2010, recently said she might be too young to sit as Chief Justice.

Crucial role

The high official close to the President said the Supreme Court would play a crucial role in the fate of the House Con-ass, which would proceed even if only a few senators showed up.

"So the Senate will run to the Supreme Court, but if there is no TRO (temporary restraining order), Congress will proceed with the Con-ass. So the Supreme Court is not out of the thicket," the official said.

The source also said the issue of whether it would be joint or separate voting by the members of Congress when proposing amendments to the Constitution was "a genuinely gray area" that had to be resolved by the high court.

But the high court "does not issue a TRO," so there is no stopping the Con-ass, the source said.

The official echoed the opinion earlier expressed to the INQUIRER by Sen. Franklin Drilon, who said the House-Palace combine's "final push" just might succeed because of the impending vacancy in the high court.

Drilon had said that with Panganiban's retirement next week, there would be only 14 justices voting on any challenge expected to be lodged against the Con-ass.

He said this could lead to a 7-7 split, if the justices would stick to their vote vis a vis the people's initiative, and render the tribunal unable to issue a TRO to stop the House from proceeding with the Con-ass, or the Commission on Elections from conducting a plebiscite to approve the amendments proposed by the House.

Onion and garlic a day keep the cancer away

From page A1

In an analysis of eight studies from Italy and Switzerland, researchers found that older adults with the highest onion and garlic intakes had the lowest risks of a number of cancers—including colon, ovarian and throat cancers.

The findings, which appear in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, are in line with some past research. But those studies were mainly conducted in China, and it is unclear if the results are different in Western countries.

Dietary habits are substantially different in China, with garlic intake, in particular, being far higher, Dr. Carlotta Galeone, the lead author of the new study said.

These latest findings suggest the anti-cancer benefit of these vegetables extend to Western populations, according to Galeone, a researcher at the Mario Negri Institute of Pharmacologic Research in Milan, Italy.

It's still not certain that onions and garlic have a direct effect on cancer risk. It's possible, for instance, that onion and garlic lovers also have an overall diet that protects against cancer, according to Galeone and her colleagues.

Tumor inhibitor

On the other hand, they note, animal studies and lab experiments with cancer cells have found that certain compounds in onions and garlic may inhibit the growth of tumors. Sulfur compounds found in garlic and antioxidant flavonoids in onions are among the potentially protective substances.

The current findings are based on results from eight studies conducted in Italy and Switzerland. Each study compared healthy older adults to patients with a particular form of cancer, asking participants for detailed information on their diets, physical activity and other lifestyle habits.

When it came to colon cancer, Galeone's team found that men and women who ate seven or more servings of onions per week had less than half the risk of those who shunned the vegetable.

Similarly, garlic lovers were a quarter less likely to develop the disease than people who maintained garlic-free diets.

The vegetables were also linked to lower risks of cancers of the mouth, throat, kidneys and ovaries.

Given what's known about the biological activity of some onion and garlic compounds, it wouldn't be a bad idea to spice up your diet with the vegetables, according to Galeone.

It's probably wise to mix them with plenty of other vegetables, however. Some research has found that garlic and tomatoes may have "synergistic" cancer-fighting effects, Galeone and her colleagues note. And, in general, experts recommend that people eat a variety of fruits and vegetables every day for overall health. *Reuters*

For right price, one can have unprotected sex

By Desiree Caluza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—THE 100-PERCENT use of condoms by all the commercial sex workers in this city cannot be attained because of the lure of higher prices offered by customers to forego protected sex.

"There is what we call 'condom negotiation.' The offer starts at P200 and for this amount they [customers] can negotiate if they want to use condoms or not," said Julius Matabia, an outreach worker of the Baguio Center for Young Adults.

"Some sex workers who are offered, say P500, in exchange for sex without condoms would take it outright," Matabia added.

He said outreach workers like him had warned sex workers about the dangers of sexually transmitted infections (STI) during unprotected sex but this was usually ignored.

"They just ignore it because of financial reasons," he said.

Matabia said the problem was more prevalent among sex workers who did not undergo regular medical exams at the city health department.

He said sex workers monitored by the city were more aware of STIs and the dangers of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) so much so that they visit the social hygiene clinic weekly for tests.

The Baguio Health Department, he said, recorded at least 700 STI cases last year.

Matabia said freelance sex workers were hesitant to go for health services out of shame and for fear of being recognized. He said most women and men in this category were college students.

He said some resorted to self-medication to treat their STI.

"As much as we want to educate them, we too are having a hard time because they do not want to surface. So what we do is we contact pimps and inform them about reproductive health care. They, in turn, educate these sex workers," Matabia said.

Eden Divinagracia, executive director of the Philippine NGO Council on Population, Health and Welfare Inc. (PNGOC), said many young sex workers were ignorant of the dangers of unprotected sex and on the use of condoms.

"These young people are very innocent, that is why we focus on them by organizing peer educators who could teach them things about safe sex and the prevention of diseases," she said.

But she noted that there had been a "dramatic change" in the use of condoms among sex workers in the last 10 years since HIV-AIDS education was introduced in key cities and towns in the country.

Divinagracia said condom use among sex workers was now at about 80 percent.

She said social hygiene clinics had noted a decline in STI cases during this period, partly because of condom use.

"Of course we cannot [quantify] how many condoms were used by merely checking the trash cans. However, social hygiene clinics had noted a decrease in the cases of STI," she said.

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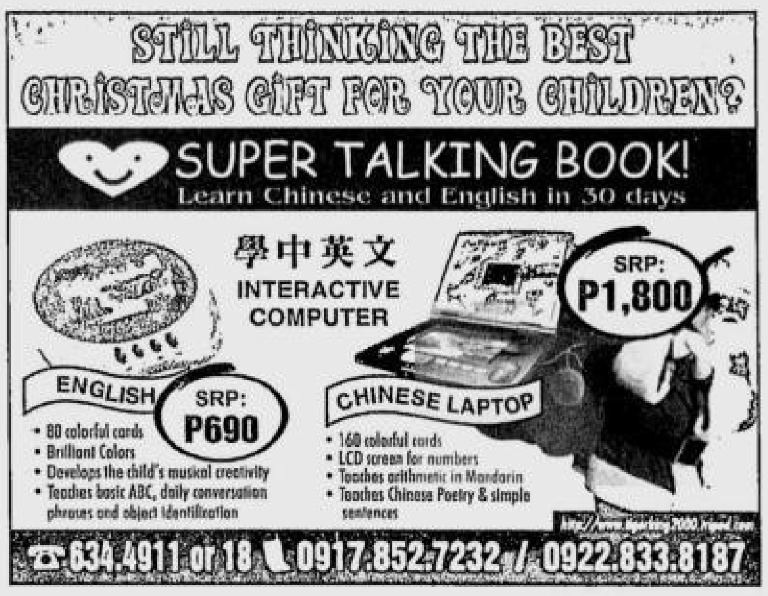

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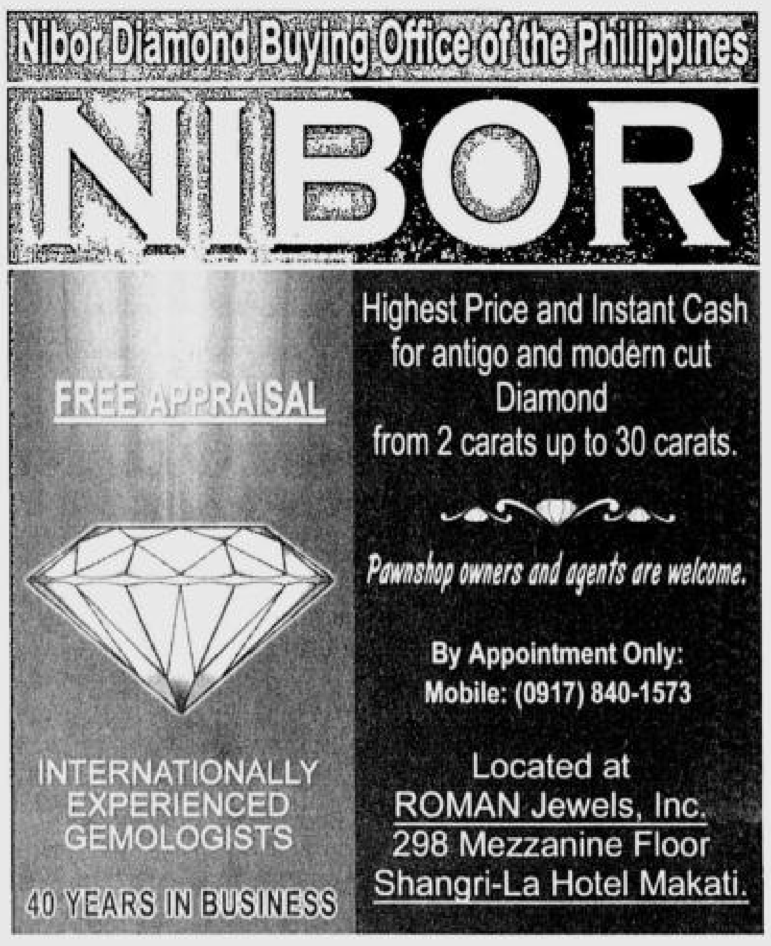

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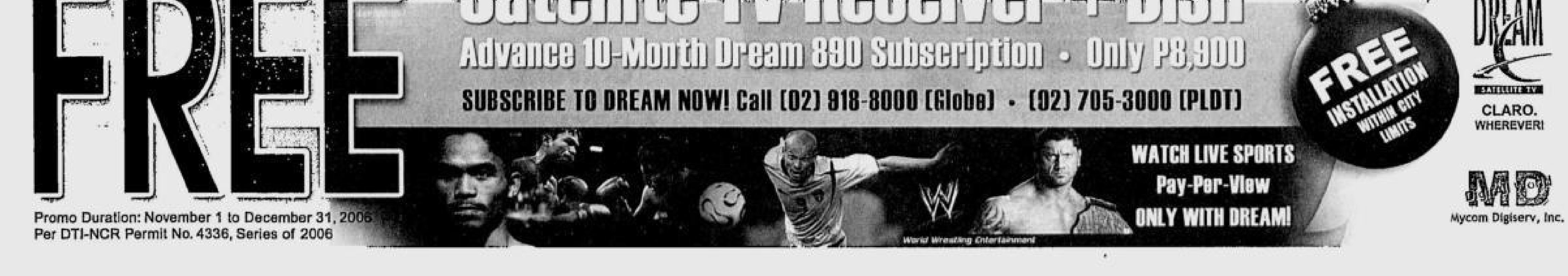

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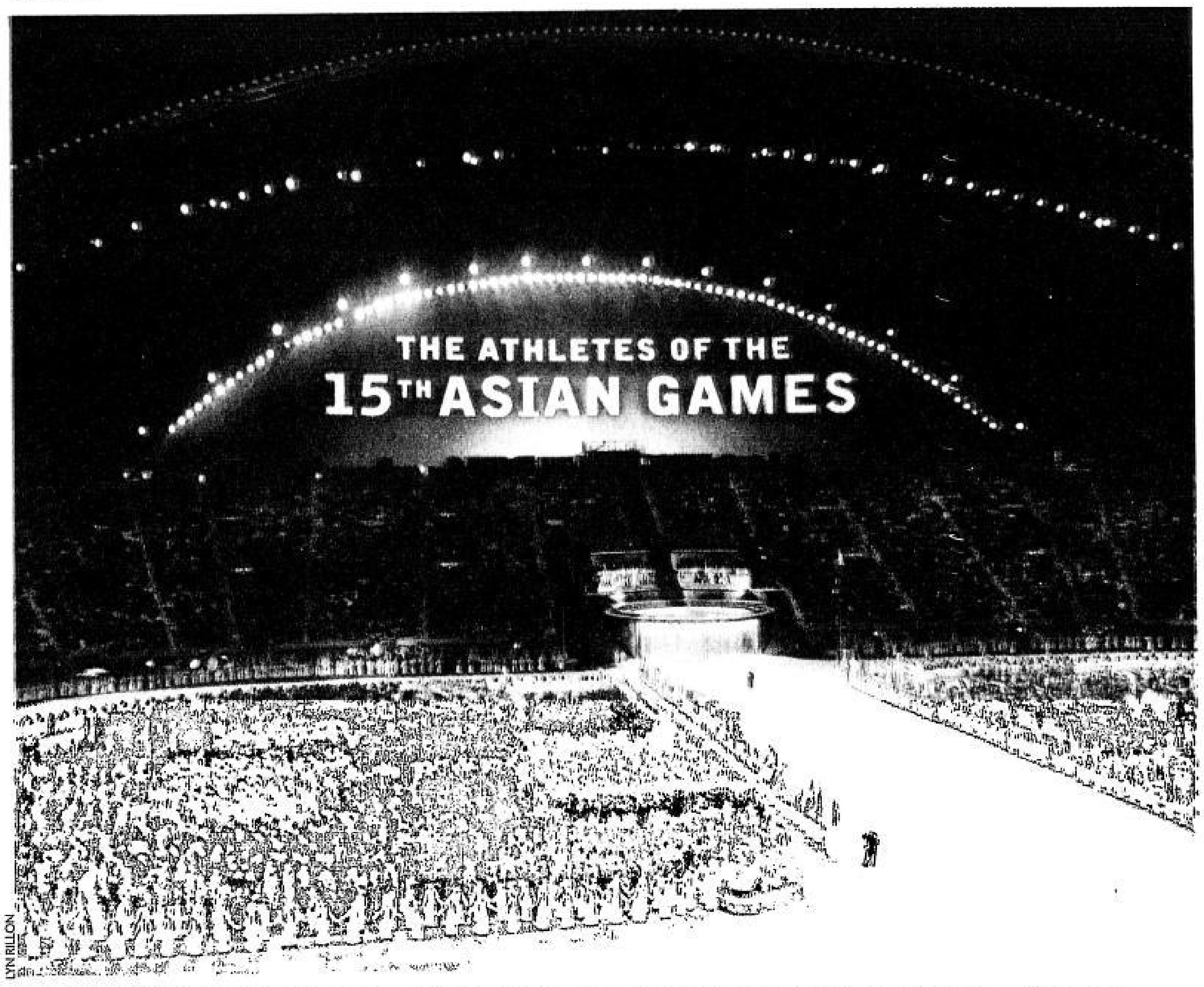


LYN RILLON

GLITZ AND GLITTER mark the show of Friday night's Opening Ceremonies of the 15th Asian Games now in full swing in Doha, Qatar.

TEAM PHILIPPINES, headed by the usual coterie of flag-waving officials and politicians, march in the parade of athletes at Doha's Khalifa Stadium. LYN R

Dionisio, Molina show promise …

From page A1

ley with a time of four minutes and 28.99 seconds. He advanced to the afternoon quarterfinals with South Korea's Han Kyu-chul, who topped the heat in 4:27.33.

Fil-American James Walsh was the only other Filipino to reach the swimming finals, finishing sixth best in the men's 200-meter butterfly with a time of 2:01.94.

Unrated teenage chess whiz Jedara Doceno also came out well prepared in the first round of individual rapid chess, forcing third-ranked Woman Grandmaster Mahiri Geldyyeva of Turkmenistan into a fighting draw.

The other Filipino chessers, both international masters, easily hurdled their opening assignments with Darwin Laylo downing Tong Kuan Mak of Macau and Ronald Dableo winning by default over Talal Shoubaita of Palentine.

Also opening their campaign on a bright note were Parley Tupaz and Rhovyl Velayo who outclassed Oman's Khalifa Al Jabri and Badar Al Subhi, 21-12, 21-14, in round 1 of men's beach volleyball.

Roel Ramirez, the lone Filipino gymnast in the quadrennial competition, ranked seventh in a massive field of 222 after the competitions in the vault, where he scored a sixth-best 15.650 points, and the rings (10.75).

Dionisio's 66 provided a scoring cushion for the trap team as Jaime Recio could only shoot 60 on strings of 22-18-20 for 25th place, two notches ahead of Eric Ang, who shot 59 (21-19-19). The Filipinos trailed the front-running Kuwaitis by 16 points in seventh place with 185 in the team event.

Not over yet

"It's not over yet, there's still much to do to catch up with the leaders," said Dionisio. "We're keeping our fingers crossed."

Payla, the 26-year-old Athens Olympian, pummelled the taller Akbari with quick one-two combinations throughout the fight and cornered all four rounds by scores of 10-6, 10-3, 5-2 and 8-2.

"I did not expect the fight to be that easy because he had the reach advantage," Payla said in Filipino. "The score surprised the team. The fight turned out to be one-sided."

Payla needs two more victories before he can cross paths with Thailand's Somjit Jongjohor, the outstanding favorite in the flyweight division.

"I am preparing real hard for Somjit," he said.

Ernesto Ebuen was eliminated by Brunei's Hamad Bu Jijji in men's table tennis, 11-5, 11-9, 11-7, 7-11, 11-8, while Tomohiko Toshima lost to Makhmadamin Khonov of Tajikistin in Round 16 of the over 100-kg division of men's judo.

The women trap shooters did not fare as solidly as their male counterparts with Gay Josefina Corral's 17th-best 56 on strings of 17-18-21 turning out to be the best they could produce under a cold drizzle at Al-Wusayl Olympic Shooting Complex north of Doha.

Anna Maria Gana landed 21st with 55 (17-19-19) and Veneranda Garcia wound up 28th with 55 (18-13-18) in the three-string competition won by China's Chen Li who shot 69 birds for the gold medal.

Filipino hopes drowned in the wake of world-caliber performances by the heavily favored Chinese and Japanese.

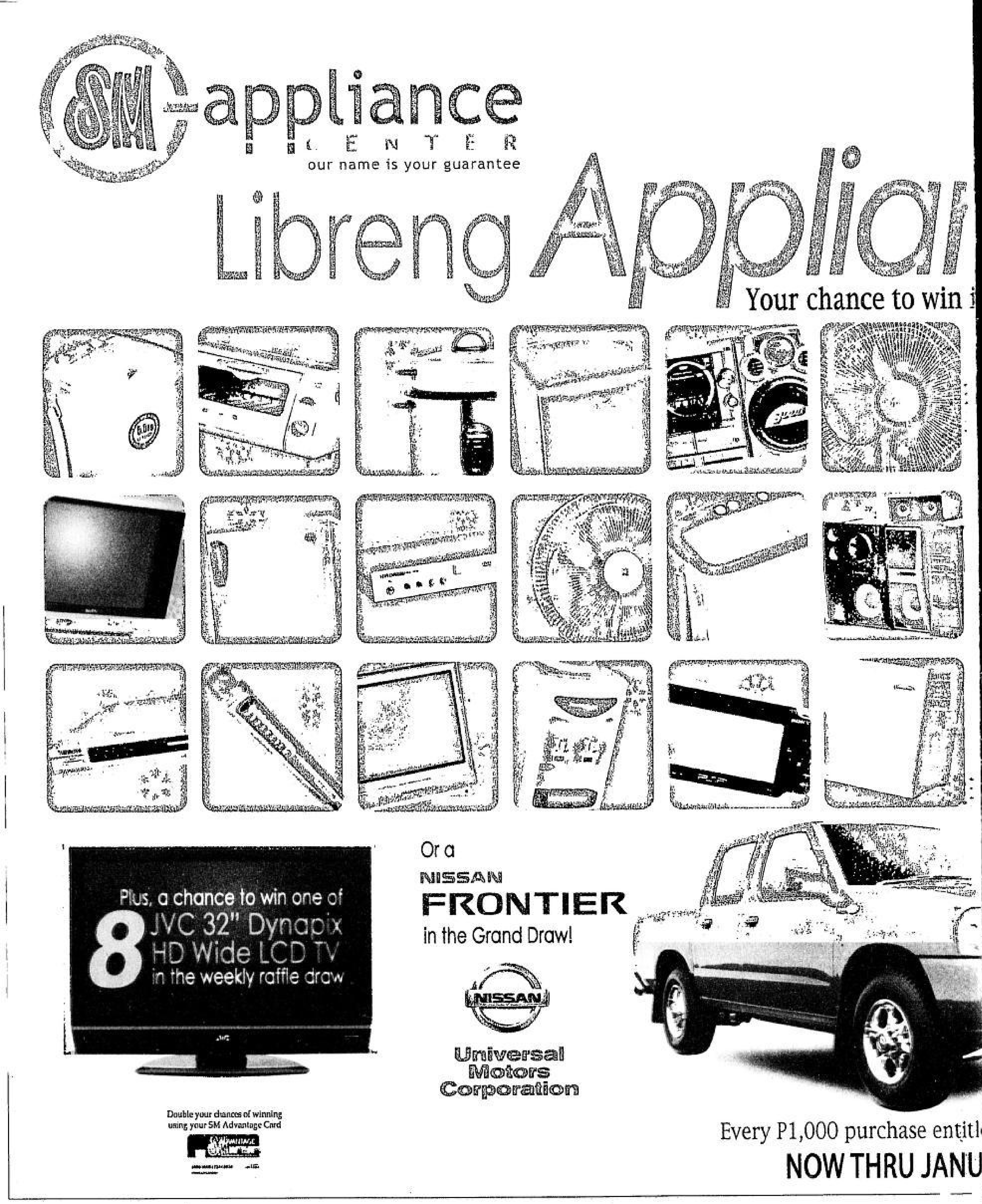
Maria Georgina Gandionco timed 2:08.84 minutes and wound up fifth in heat 1 of the 200m freestyle topped by China's Yang Yu in 1:59.59, and Fil-American Erica Totten fared no better with the same finish on a time of 2:08.83 in heat 2 won by Japan's Maki Mite in 2:00.44.

Totten returned to the pool in mid-morning and finished fifth again in her heat of the women's 100m butterfly with a clocking of 1:08.04.Denjylie Cordero was fifth and second to last in the first heat of the women's 50-m breaststroke in 36.02 while Ernest Lorenzo Dee was seventh and last in the heat 1 of the men's 200 butterfly.

Filipinos also struggled in soft tennis with the South Koreans leading the Filipinas, 2-0, and Chinese Taipei winning the first match against the Filipinos before games were rained out.

Petro Bantay yielded to Korean Kim Ji-eun and Divina Gracia Escala bowed to Lee Kyung-pyo by the same 0-4 scores in the morning matches.

Orlando Silvoza held Yang Sheng-fo to a 1-1 standoff when tournament officials suspended action for the day. Earlier, Wenifredo de Leon proved no match to Chinese Taipei's Li Chia-hung, 1-4.



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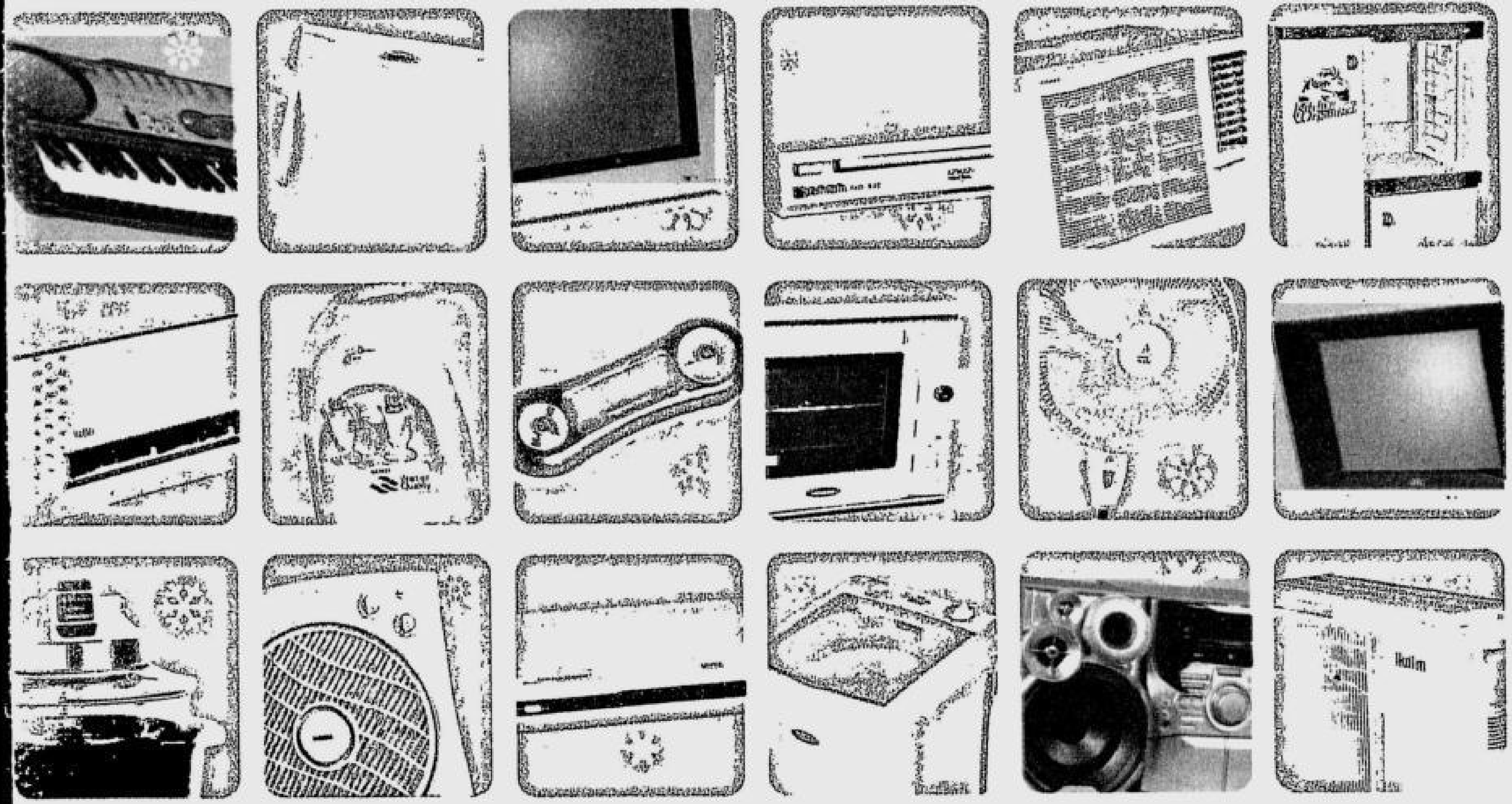

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RP pushes fund to get OFWs out of conflict areas

By Jerome Aning

THE PHILIPPINES HAS BACKED CALLS TO ESTABLISH an international fund for the emergency evacuation of migrant workers caught in conflict.

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion pushed for the proposals while representing the Philippines during a key plenary discussion on global migration late last week by the governing body of the 120-member International Organization for Migration in Geneva, Switzerland.

Brion cited IOM's earlier joint effort with the Philippine government in successfully repatriating overseas Filipino workers affected by the conflict in Lebanon.

It would be recalled that IOM helped in finding and paying for the transport of nearly 7,000 overseas Filipino workers who were evacuated at the outbreak of clashes between Hezbollah militants and Israeli military forces in southern Lebanon starting in July.

In an interview before he left for Geneva, the secretary disclosed that the IOM funds used in the evacuation did not actually come from IOM but from voluntary contributions of member-countries of the European Union.

The secretary participated in the discussion that focused on the topic, "Partnerships in Migration," during which he presented a global migration management concept based on the Philippines' role as the leading source of productive workers for today's international economy.

Brion highlighted the Philippines' migration management model for the productive engagement, protection and welfare of OFWs—from their deployment in host economies up to their reintegration into their country's socioeconomic mainstream on their return.

In fact, he said, state intervention has even taken place in the pre-employment stage, during which Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, in coordination with local governments, civil society, church groups and the academe, disseminate information on what it is like to work abroad.

"We consider this important under the view that temporary contract migration is not a career path solely strewn with rose petals," Brion said in his speech. "Migration has social costs that the migrant must understand, appreciate and fully prepare for as he leaves for his foreign work."

The IOM has said that as more and more migrants provide promising economic opportunities, partnerships were useful to identify gaps and surpluses in labor markets.

DOLE set to help OFWs readjust to life back home

THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT plans to set up a "reintegration center" in Makati to help returning overseas Filipino workers adjust better to life back home.

The center, to be located in Makati's central business district, will open in January and will be funded by a number of European governments, according to Labor Secretary Arturo Brion.

The center's program would cover personal, community and economic reintegration, he said.

Brion said he spoke to representatives of the European governments involved during a recent International Labor Organization meeting in Geneva. *(See related story above)*

"They're all very excited and eager to to fund it and hope it will become a model for other countries," Brion told reporters.

"You see, European countries are suffering from over-migration as many people go to Europe but don't want to leave," he said.

"In our case, we want Filipino migrant workers to return to the Philippines sooner or later, and we are doing something so that they won't have to go abroad to work again and be separated from their families," he said.

The reintegration program will also take advantage of the skills and experiences gained by OFWs abroad that can be used by domestic enterprises, thus resulting in a "brain gain" for the country.

As an example, Brion cited plans to tap former OFWs in Taiwan to fill up local jobs in businesses that have been set up by Taiwanese businessmen in the Subic and Clark economic zones.

Brion said the Department of Labor and Employment would continue its programs to assist returning OFWs find local jobs or reemployment overseas, set up local businesses, or look for livelihood and retraining opportunities.

Community reintegration will be pursued with local government units and nongovernment organizations to tap both returning OFWs and those still working overseas who may want to help in the development of their countrymen.

Brion cited the CGMA project under this program in which OFWs had raised money for the construction of more than 450 classrooms in the localities of their choice in the Philippines.

Under economic reintegration, the government continues to improve the remittance channels for the OFWs and encourage and assist those wanting to invest their remittances, he said.

"We want to help the migrant save and manage his funds through our intervention in remittances and the investment assistance we shall deliver in partnership with banks and other financial institutions," Brion said. *Jerome Aning*

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OPINION

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No show?

EDITORIAL

AFTER THE FIVE MOST SENIOR ASSOCIATE justices of the Supreme Court failed to show up for their "public interview" with the Judicial and Bar Council last Wednesday, Sen. Francis Pangilinan reached a dramatic decision. The ex-officio member of the JBC said he would move to have the five justices—who were in the short list of nominees to replace Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban by virtue of their seniority—disqualified from consideration.

"Based on our rules, if nominees do not show up for the interviews they would no longer be included on the short list. Rules are rules—they should apply to all," said Pangilinan, who represents the Senate in the eight-person JBC.

He suggested that the JBC had two options: To declare a failure of the process and source new nominations, or waive the public interview requirement altogether.

Actually, the JBC has a third option: To place the public interview requirement in the right perspective. And then settle with dispatch on the three nominees it will, per its constitutional mandate, recommend to the President.

A close reading of Rule 7 of the Rules of the Judicial and Bar Council, which concerns "personal interviews," suggests that the interview requirement refers in fact to first-time judges. Consider some of the objectives of the interview: to "assess their ability to express themselves, especially in the language of the law in court trials/proceedings and in their decisions or rulings." And "to evaluate their readiness and commitment to assume and fulfill the duties and responsibilities of judgeship." And, in a telling sign, the following provision: "The interviews may be held or conducted outside of Manila."

Does Pangilinan seriously think that there is a pressing need to assess the ability of the five justices (Reynato Puno, Leonardo Quisumbing, Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago and Antonio Carpio) "to express themselves, especially in the language of the law"—a need, furthermore, that he thinks can be met only through a public interview? What does the young senator hope to accomplish in the allotted 30 minutes, a fervent recitation from memory of the Gettysburg Address?

Does he also think there is a need to evaluate the "readiness and commitment" of the five justices, the youngest of whom has already spent five years sitting in the highest tribunal, "for the duties and responsibilities of judgeship"?

The Rules themselves remind the members of the JBC that "it is not possible or advisable to lay down ironclad rules to determine the fitness of those who aspire" for the judiciary (or senior positions in the Office of the Ombudsman). Thus we cannot understand why Pangilinan insists on a black-letter reading of one particular rule, even to the point of killing the spirit of the law by "disqualifying" five of the most qualified nominees.

We are not saying that no outsider should be considered for the position of Chief Justice; on the contrary, we have over the years supported the effort to fill the high court with lawyers from varied disciplines, even from outside the judiciary. We have no objection, per se, to politician-nominees (only a continuing reservation about particularly partisan appointments). We believe there may yet be equally qualified nominees from outside the Supreme Court who will honor the five justices with their company. And we certainly do not think that a personal interview is the only way to gauge the judicial philosophy of a potential chief justice. In fact, in the case of sitting justices, we have access not only to an articulation of a judicial philosophy, but its practice.

Does Pangilinan seriously suggest that, say, Justice Puno or Justice Carpio, or indeed any of the other justice-nominees, has failed to make their judicial world-view clear, or their "loyalty to law, justice and the ideals of an independent Judiciary"—in the rolling language of the Rules—perfectly self-evident?

A public interview with potential chief justices would make good political theater, especially in a time of grave political crisis. But it is not necessary in choosing the next chief, wisely and well.

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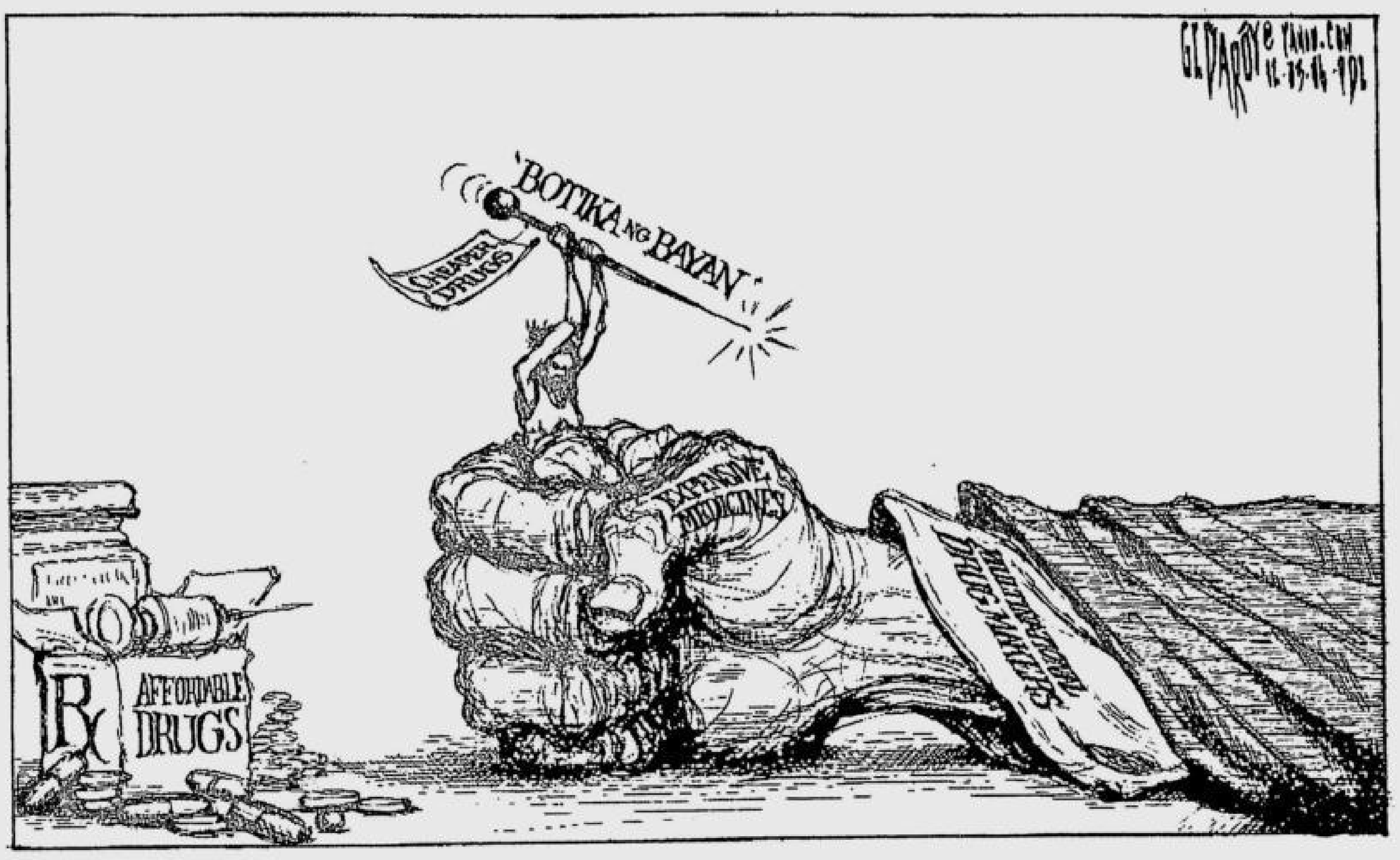


Rewarding disloyalty

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

A NATURAL-BORN FILIPINA NATURALIZED in Australia and repatriated under the Dual Citizenship Law of 2003 takes issue with my recent article where I observed that dual citizenship necessarily results in dual allegiance, which is considered "inimical to the national interest" by our Constitution.

She says dual citizens are contributing vastly to the progress of the Philippines and cites facts and figures to show the tremendous amounts of money they have been remitting to their relatives here as material evidence of their love for our country. The implication is that they have never really abandoned the Philippines despite their formal and sworn renunciation of allegiance to it when they transferred their exclusive loyalty to their adopted and usually more prosperous country.

I have no means of checking her impressive statistics nor do I care to. I concede that many Filipino families are receiving substantial financial help from their relatives abroad although I would imagine this is mostly from our OFWs who have not relinquished their Philippine citizenship while working in foreign lands. They are staying abroad only for the income they can earn there that is not available now in the Philippines. But they will eventually return to their families and homes in their own country, and still as faithful Filipinos.

Even assuming that all the foreign currency we are now receiving comes from Filipinos who have been naturalized in their new countries, that is no argument for allowing them the extraordinary privileges they will enjoy as dual citizens. By simply taking the oath of allegiance prescribed by the Dual Citizenship Law, and without having to bring wads of greenbacks to dazzle our slums, they retain or resume their original status as natural-born Filipino citizens. As such, they can exercise all the civil and political rights allowed all qualified citizens of this country except the right to hold elective or appointive public offices.

The monetary assistance they contribute to the progress of the Philippines is no argument for their privileged treatment, in some instances even over and above that given to Filipinos who have never left this country and shifted their loyalty to other lands. The investments of foreigners in the Philippines easily come to mind. Americans, Japanese, Chinese and other alien businessmen have considerably enriched our national economy. But none of them can exercise the rights to vote, hold public elective or appointive office, organize and administer institutions of learning, exploit our natural resources, control the mass media and means of communication and transportation, engage in the retail trade, and other activities reserved only for Filipinos.

Compared to the average Filipino who has never even left this country, the repatriated Filipino under the Dual Citizenship Law who has deserted this country in search of a better life abroad is welcomed back by our authorities with open arms. Dual citizens are even rewarded with special privileges not accorded ordinary citizens who have never wavered in their fidelity to the only country they love with unalloyed devotion.

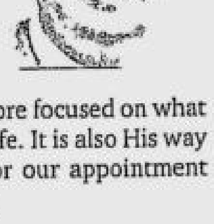
Consider the case of Loida Nicolas-Lewis vs Commission on Elections, filed by the critic now subject of this column, a natural-born Filipino citizen who was naturalized elsewhere and repatriated herself under the Dual Citizenship Law. She was barred from voting in the 2004 elections for lack of the suffrage qualification of residence in the Philippines for one year and in the place where she was intending to vote for at least six months immediately preceding the election. On appeal to the Supreme Court, however, she was sustained on the ground that there was nothing in the Dual Citizenship Law requiring citizens repatriated under its provisions to possess the said residence requirement in order to be able to vote here. Incredibly, the decision, like "the lady who doth protest too much," exhausted feeble excuses in dismissing Art. V, Sec. 1 of the Constitution as if it were municipal ordinance.

I reiterate my submission that citizenship inevitably and unavoidably requires allegiance, which must be absolute and exclusive, forsaking all others. Dual citizenship under RA 9225 allows our total loyalty to the Philippines to be shared and divided with other states preferred over the native land solemnly and under oath abandoned and disowned. Dual citizens can enjoy the best of both worlds unlike the rest of us who choose to embrace only the Philippines, with all its bounties and limitations, as our one and only country.

Forgiveness is blessed as in the case of the prodigal but remorseful son in the Bible, but we live in a mortal world where the Dual Citizenship Law lures the unrepentant renegade back to the country he has renounced, his disloyalty forgiven and even rewarded by our coddling government. With all due respect, I hope Congress will give its sentimental mistake a second more realistic look.

Advent, now

MOMENTS



Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

I HEARD THAT THERE ARE THREE SIGNS that show one is growing old. The first sign is when one gets to be forgetful. The second sign is ... what was it again?

* * *

Today is the first Sunday of Advent. In today's Gospel (Lk. 21, 25-28; 34-36), we are particularly reminded to be aware of the signs and to be vigilant at all times. While there is fear and anticipation, the overriding feeling should be that of hope and joy, and we are urged to "stand erect, and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand."

* * *

Recently, the whole country waited in fear as it prepared for the coming of supertyphoon Reming. We anticipated its coming, monitored its path and prepared for its impending wrath. We all were vigilant and were on the lookout for signs. Advent is something like that, a time for waiting—but not with fear; rather, with hope and joy, with love and true repentance in our hearts.

* * *

I celebrated Mass for Max Soliven at Camp Aguinaldo last Nov. 30. A lot has been said, and a lot still can be said about this great writer and journalist. But what Max was saying all these years in his column "By the Way" was that he and, for that matter, all of us are just "by the way," that in this world we are all just passing by, that we are all pilgrims and wanderers in this life. We travel many, different roads and byways in this life, but in the end we all will meet in Him, "the Way, the Truth and the Life."

* * *

Getting sick is one sure sign of our mortality. In fact, it should serve as a warning for us to prepare for our inevitable departure from this world. It is a clear and present reminder for us that earthly life, with all its power, riches and pleasures, is not forever. Sickness is God's way of reaching out to us to remind us to repent, become better and to be more focused on what is really important in this life. It is also His way of telling us to prepare for our appointment with death and eternal life.

* * *

If God were to take you now, what would be the overriding feeling in your heart? The answer to the question depends on the kind of life you are living now.

* * *

Please don't forget your Advent glasses, for life. This constant awareness of our mortality, and our inevitable appointment with death, God and eternity should make us see more clearly, love more dearly and live more truly. When confronted with earthly cares and sorrows, put on your Advent glasses and see beyond what meets the eye. When blinded by the glitter of worldly riches, pleasures and power, put on your Advent glasses and see that all these are fleeting and temporary. When the visibility is zero because of storms in life, put on your Advent glasses, and see behind the clouds the beauty that awaits those who love God.

* * *

Make Advent a family affair. It is a beautiful time of the year to teach the children that Christmas is not just about getting but also giving. Get them focused not so much on the external as on the internal preparations, like praying, making a good confession and reaching out to the poor. Help them to make Christmas happen in their lives, and to make Christmas happen in other people's lives.

* * *

Christmas decorations are all around us now. OK. Fine. However, let us be reminded that we cannot overdo our decorating while people around us are suffering. It is revolting to know how much some people spend just to feel cozy and "Christmasy," and give little or nothing to people in need. If Christ came to our midst today, would He still recognize that what we are celebrating is His birthday? Let us not be so focused on the signs that we forget what or who they really signify.

* * *

Inviting you for the launching of the CD "Believe Like A Child" by the 13-year-old blind girl Fatima Soriano, on Dec. 8 at a 6 p.m. Mass in Christ the King Seminary Chapel, 1101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City. Fatima's simple songs remind us that you and I were once children, and that we all are children of God. With all our adult concerns, impurities, selfishness and pride, may we all still pray and believe like a child.

* * *

Dec. 8 is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. It is also the 85th birthday of my Mama. Thank God for mothers. May God bless all mothers. Let us also all continue to pray for our motherland. May her sons and daughters be given good, responsible and responsive leaders. Someday soon, may no Filipino have to leave our country just to find work, and may there be more food in every Filipino home, especially during Christmas.

* * *

In times of trouble, prayer gives us relief by entrusting our worries to the Almighty Father. A lot of people are suffering; let us pray for them, too. Get daily suggestions of Prayer, text ON PRAYER to 2948 for Globe/Sun, or 3940 for Smart. God bless you. Mama Mary loves you!

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, help me to be really aware, prepared and ready for your coming. Amen.

Candor and humility

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PHILIPPINE Ambassadors' Foundation last Tuesday, the guest of honor was US Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney, the first American lady envoy to the Philippines. She is one of the growing number of female ambassadors assigned to Manila since the installation of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as President of the Philippines. Singapore, Sweden, Finland, Thailand, Brunei, India and Mexico are other countries represented by the distaff side.

In her brief remarks, Ambassador Kenney noted that 2006 was a special year in Philippine-American relations. First, this year marks the 60th anniversary of US-Philippine friendship. For the younger generations, perhaps, an explanation is in order.

In the past, July 4 used to be celebrated as Philippine Independence Day to mark the occasion when the United States granted independence to the Philippines in 1946. For 15 years, we celebrated the event in much the same manner as the Americans—parades, fireworks, balloons; even hotdog sandwiches were the order of the day. One of the fondest memories of the cadets of the Philippine Military Academy was going down to Manila to spearhead the Fourth of July Independence Day parade at the Luneta. It was one of the few occasions when cadets could leave their barracks at Fort Del Pilar for a few days' break with their girlfriends or parents.

When Diosdado Macapagal was elected president in 1961, he decided, mainly for nationalistic reasons, to transfer Independence Day from July 4th to June 12th. It was on June 12, 1898 that Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo read the Declaration of Independence from the balcony of his home in Kawit, Cavite. At the same time, July 4th was designated as Philippine-American Friendship Day (1946-2006) in a gesture of goodwill and camaraderie toward the United States.

But there was more than just nationalism that led Macapagal to move Independence Day to June 12. When you share the same Independence Day with a superpower like the United States, your foreign posts abroad run the risk of having very few guests, with most of the crowd heading for the US Embassy. So he decided that we needed a different holiday. At least, that's how he explained things to Stanley Karnow in the book "In Our Image."

At any rate, I am certainly glad that "Cong" Dadong chose June 12. It happens to be my Dad's birthday and how can we argue against a whole nation joining us in celebrating such a joyous event.

Second, this year also marks the 100th anniversary of the arrival of Filipinos in the United States. I believe Ambassador Kenney was referring to the arrival of this batch of Filipinos, mostly Ilocanos recruited to work in the sugar cane and pineapple plantations in what was then the Territory of Hawaii. When the infant Philippine foreign service was born, my father was appointed the first consul general to Hawaii in 1947. The family joined him in Honolulu and, as a young boy, I met many of our relatives who had arrived much earlier to work in the fields of Hawaii. It was not an easy life for them but like the modern-day overseas foreign workers, they managed to support their families and relatives back home with part of their earnings.

In the open forum that followed Kenney's speech, one of the questions raised had to do with the subject with which she was not too familiar with. Instead of trying to snowball her way through with some kind of answer, she readily acknowledged that she would have to look into the matter as she was not too conversant with the topic that was raised. Candor and humility from the envoy of a superpower! Too often, people in high places adopt the attitude that they must appear to be all-knowing and, sometimes, they fall flat on their faces. Perhaps, the quagmire in Iraq could have been avoided with a little bit more of the candor and humility displayed by our guest of honor.

* * *

Yesterday, the family motored to Lubao, Pampanga to inaugurate a one-room library in memory of Kevin Antonio Marschner, son of our niece Cayo Nivera and her husband Fred Marschner, residents of Moraga, California.

Several months ago, Nancy Harrington, founder of the non-profit, all volunteer "Books for the Barrios" program, suggested a one-room library in Kevin's memory for an elementary school in the Philippines. For the past 31 years, Nancy and her husband Dan, a former Navy fighter pilot based at Subic, have been obtaining donations of books and educational materials and shipping them to the poorest schools in the Philippines. Nancy offered to oversee the planning and building of the Kevin Antonio Marschner Library, and to provide all the books.

When Mt. Pinatubo erupted in 1991, numerous villages were permanently destroyed. Shortly after the eruption, Cayo's best friend from high school, Gigi Carlos, and her friends—all members of the Pinatubo Foundation—adopted and relocated one village on donated land about 30 miles from Mt. Pinatubo. They raised funds to build modest cement block homes. Each family pays a small monthly fee, and in 25 years the home is theirs. Since the only school in the area was too far from the village, the group obtained additional funding to build a three-room school. From 210 children in the early days, the population of Wenceslao Elementary School in Lubao has grown to 420 students today, occupying seven small buildings.

Kevin's library is the latest addition to the school's facilities. Yesterday's turnover, attended by family and friends of Cayo and Fred and the Harringtons, marks the first anniversary of Kevin's death.

Funny and serious talk on sex

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

DAVAO—I'VE BEEN IN THIS SOUTHERN CITY since Thursday for the First International Meeting of Experts on Emergency Contraception, cosponsored by the Asia Pacific Network on Emergency Contraception (Apnec) and the Brokenshire Woman Center, and convened by Davao City Mayor Rodrigo R. Duterte.

The last was a rather surprising development, since it isn't often (in fact, well nigh impossible) that a local government executive would be willing to associate himself with, and indeed host, an international meeting of advocates of emergency contraception.

"We approached him just to request if he could host a dinner or reception for the participants," recalls Dr. Darleen San Jose-Estuart, of the Brokenshire Woman Center, one of the organizers. "But when we told him what the meeting was all about, he insisted on hosting the whole event, saying he believed in what we are fighting for."

As it turns out, Mayor Duterte is not only a supporter of reproductive health and rights, he is something of an iconoclast, and that rare creature—a public official willing to take on the Church on issues around population, family planning, reproductive health and sex.

Addressing the meeting Friday afternoon, Duterte opened his talk by saying that "I am not a moralist" but that, as Davao mayor since 1988, "I have stared at the problem of overpopulation and realized that our city is really overloaded."

This is the reason, he said, that he pursued the city's family planning program aggressively, a decision that has put him at loggerheads with religious authorities. But, says the plain-spoken mayor, "you cannot talk about contraception without talking about sex." And that afternoon, he seemed unusually willing and open to talk about people's sexuality, including his own.

* * *

WHILE a student at the Jesuit-run Ateneo de Davao, recalled Duterte, their teachers filled his and his friends' minds with "prohibitions on sex and even entertaining impure thoughts," which, he reflected, "goes against the grain of humanity."

Sex, he insisted, is a primal urge. "You cannot stop it, you need sex like you need air to breathe." He even recalled a girlfriend of his in his college days who, whenever he asked how the sex was, would reply: "It was heaven!" (A case of shameless self-promotion, I thought.) "What can be wrong with an act that brings a human being nearer to heaven?" he asked rhetorically.

Sex is one of the rare pleasures of life "that puts the garbage collector on equal footing with kings and emperors," he noted. And yet, by putting all sorts of moralistic sanctions and unrealistic limitations on couples and individuals, so-called moralists "seek to deprive humanity of one of the few pleasures of life, (and) poison the minds of young people." The strong opposition of the Church not just to family planning but to sexual pleasure, he maintains, "has cheapened sex" and dampened all free discussion of it, including the means to protect oneself from unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. And if God intended human beings to enjoy sex only if they intended to reproduce, he said, "why does the penis hang there all the time, and not be retractable, to be used only when needed?"

Emergency contraception, which prevents a possible pregnancy and does not end one (it would not work anyway in the event a woman is already pregnant), said the Davao mayor, "ought to be openly discussed and allowed."

* * *

IN FACT, we learned later, when interviewed by local media before leaving Marco Polo hotel where the meeting was held, Duterte held aloft a packet of the single-dose EC pill and said he was committed to making it available in the city in the near future.

From the EC meeting, Duterte proceeded to the annual observance of World AIDS Day and, during his address, friends told us later, delivered much the same speech but this time in saltier and earthier Visayan, leaving the crowd in stitches.

And yet, even as any discussion about sex, whether by a "macho" mayor or not, draws laughter, giggles and guffaws, sex and its consequences are decidedly serious matters.

Emelina Quintillan, Apnec coordinator, who sits on the steering committee of the International Consortium on Emergency Contraception, says contraception—or the desire for it—has existed since ancient times, even if most everyone relied on unsafe and ineffective methods to prevent pregnancy.

But ever since modern methods of contraception came into wide use, "post-coital contraception" has remained "the least known and most controversial" method, with determined oppositors insisting on equating it with abortion.

* * *

BETWEEN 1995 and 2000, some 300 million women worldwide had "mistimed and unwanted" pregnancies, said Quintillan. And of this number, some 700,000 women died as a consequence of pregnancy or delivery, including those who went through unsafe abortion.

The biggest problem with emergency contraception, she added, was women's lack of awareness that it even exists, that it is possible to prevent a pregnancy even after unprotected sex, including rape and assault. But other problems exist as well, Quintillan pointed out. Women need to know how to use EC in the right way—within 3-5 days after unprotected sex, in two doses, 12 hours apart (though there are now higher-dose single pills; and in the case of the "Yuzpe" method, multiple doses of regular oral contraceptive pills)—and where to buy it (if it is available).

Dr. Reggie dela Paz-Ingente, of the Women and Child Protection Unit of the Davao Medical Center, knows full well the desperation of the situation, declaring: "No matter how many prayer groups she may belong to, a mother whose child is raped will beg you for EC."

Poverty and the disaster threshold

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

WITH AT LEAST 400 PEOPLE DEAD IN BICOL and Southern Tagalog in the wake of supertyphoon "Reming," we may expect, yet again, another round of national reflection aimed at gathering lessons and lecturing our people on natural disasters. This is a favorite sport of politicians. Unfortunately, such reflection yields little by way of self-understanding because we fail to recognize that the one thing that makes living in these islands particularly disaster-filled is mass poverty itself.

Many like to believe we are being singled out for punishment by Nature. This belief has a certain plausibility in view of the unnecessary damage we have mindlessly inflicted on this beautiful archipelago. But, in truth, Nature is neither grateful nor vengeful. Its ways are not moral or immoral. There are no such things as natural disasters; there are only such things as natural phenomena with sometimes disastrous consequences.

The Earth is one planet, and it is round. It is reasonable to assume that risks from natural phenomena are equally distributed geographically. Some people die from tsunamis and typhoons. On the other side of the world, they die from floods and severe winters. What ultimately determines the body count is the capacity of people to shield themselves from the worst effects of these devastating events. Poverty is many things, but above all, it is vulnerability. It is, in the first instance, what makes people live on the slopes of active volcanoes or build their shanties on the banks of powerful rivers.

On a motorcycling trip to Bicol that I recently undertook with some friends, I had a chance to follow side roads and visit communities that were not normally part of the tourist track. I couldn't but be struck by the contrast between the ominous beauty of Mayon Volcano and the awesome poverty of the people living in its shadows. Rising from a level landscape like an altar to a powerful god, Mayon was visible from almost any of the byways we took. I do not know of any other Philippine mountain that could command meekness by its sheer majesty. Outside the *poblaciones*, it is difficult to say if the villagers have learned to live with typhoons and volcanic eruptions, but one could easily read their deep fatalism from the perilous location and structural frailty of their dwellings.

In the civilized world, such sites would have long been declared unfit for human habitation. They are beautiful but fatal to live in. They include known geological fault lines, the slopes of active volcanoes, river banks given to unpredictable rises in water level, dried-up river beds and places along regular typhoon corridors. Poverty compels people to ignore the risks they pose; political opportunism makes politicians close their eyes to the dangers to which their constituencies expose themselves. What gives potency to both is that the risks are not immediate or always apparent.

In this sense, so-called natural calamities are as much the products of nature as they are of human beings. What is interesting is that our political leaders are aware of this. They give way and listen to the lectures of scientists whenever a natural phenomenon is attended by many deaths and massive destruction. Science somehow frees them from assuming direct responsibility for the tragedy. They quickly translate the scientific messages into warnings issued to the public. But they themselves are totally incapable of incorporating the practical implications of science into their decision-making process. Every year we go through this ritual in the proceedings of the National Disaster Coordinating Council, with little effect on what government itself needs to do to prevent these disasters.

That this pattern of benign neglect by political leaders seldom becomes a political issue shows how relatively immune we have become to disasters. We take these things as acts of God, rather than as events whose destructive effects a nation can reasonably shield its citizens from.

While it has become commonplace for the mass media to report disasters in terms of dead people and billions of pesos in destroyed property and infrastructure, there are no objective criteria by which to define a disaster. Nicholas Rescher, a scholar who writes on risk, observes: "Rich and poor have different disaster thresholds (what constitutes a disaster for one is merely a loss for the other), so that the wealthy have a better chance of being able to offset risks against opportunities than do the poor."

The truth is our disaster threshold as a nation is extremely low. We suffer much from every visiting calamity, and we recover ever so slowly. We are familiar with the language of relief, but we hardly know the vocabulary of prevention. We have become so used to loss that we hardly remember what it is to live a secure life.

But the responsibilities of a modern state are different. If a nation cannot secure its citizens from the ravages of the most basic natural disasters, how can it be expected to protect them from the time-bound hazards that attend many of today's political decisions? The unexamined provisions of the Japan-Philippine Economic Partnership Agreement pertaining to toxic wastes easily come to mind. The political system is ultimately society's tool for observing risks. But it works only to the extent that it makes room for oppositional views.

* * *

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

China's green debt

WORLD VIEW

Pan Yue

FOR A DECADE, THE WORLD HAS WONDERED WHEN China's leaders will recognize the staggering environmental crisis confronting their country. This year, we got an answer: a new Five-Year Plan that makes environmental protection a priority. A storm of green propaganda has followed, and the government now talks about using "Green GDP" to measure development. But will all these talks amount to real progress?

While the central government admits to some of the environmental degradation caused by rapid economic growth, the picture it paints is incomplete. Consider "Green GDP." This spring, the State Environmental Protection Administration produced the country's first official estimate of GDP adjusted downward for environmental losses. According to these calculations, it would cost $84 billion to clean up the pollution produced in 2004—that is 3 percent of the GDP for that year. But more realistic estimates put environmental damage at 8-13 percent of China's GDP growth each year, which means that China has lost almost everything it has gained since the late 1970s due to pollution.

China's environmental problems, complex as the causes may be, can ultimately be attributed to our understanding of Marxism. For most of our recent history, we saw in Marxism only a philosophy of class struggle. We believed that economic development would solve all our problems. In the reform period, this misreading of Marx morphed into an unrestrained pursuit of material gain devoid of morality. Traditional Chinese culture, with its emphasis on harmony between human beings and nature, was thrown aside.

As a result, China's economy is now dominated by resource-hungry and inefficient polluters, such as coal and mineral mines, textile and paper mills, iron and steel makers, petrochemical factories, and building material producers. Our cities are exploding in size, depleting water resources and creating horrific traffic congestion.

One-quarter of China's people drink substandard water; one-third of urbanites breathe badly polluted air. Moreover, the country recently witnessed a spate of environmental accidents. Indeed, on average, China suffers a major water pollution accident every other day.

Although China has signed the Kyoto Protocol and some 50 other international environmental accords, we do little to honor them. If we are not serious about upgrading our industrial structure, we will fail when the time comes to fulfill our commitments to cut emissions. And while the new Five-Year Plan sets fine goals, many provinces have failed even to meet the major environment protection targets of the last Five-Year Plan.

True, China, in three decades, has made the kind of economic advances that took Western countries 100 years to achieve. But China also has suffered a century's worth of environmental damage in 30 years. Unfortunately, unlike the Western countries, we cannot afford to wait until our per capita annual GDP reaches $10,000 before tackling our environmental problems. Our experts predict that the environmental crisis will intensify to a critical stage by the time China's per capita annual GDP reaches just $3,000.

Making matters worse, while we discarded the finer elements of our traditional culture, we failed to absorb the better aspects of modern civilization. The concept of a "social contract" based on rights and obligations—the essential values that constitute the most important precondition for effective environmental protection—goes largely ignored. As a result, environmental protection projects often fail to be included in calculating production costs. Scarcely anyone bothers to consider the environmental costs to—or rights of—the country's poor and powerless.

It is imperative that environmental factors figure in China's macroeconomic planning in a real way. This requires that a more rational strategy be mapped out in the planning of major industrial projects and energy-hungry enterprises. Careful studies need to be done to determine available energy, land, mineral and biological resources before projects proceed. Land planning must be overhauled, with industrial monopolies broken up and development goals set according to population, resource volume and the capacity to absorb pollution.

Finally, China needs a new energy strategy. Industrialized nations have developed and made great use of nuclear, solar, wind, bio-gas and other renewable energy resources. China's technological capacities in this sector lag behind even other developing nations such as India and Pakistan, and its reliance on coal is one of the greatest threats to the global climate. For now, there is simply no alternative. But in the long run, clean energy will be the only way to bring economic growth without doing irreparable environmental damage.

Government cannot solve these problems on its own. China's people have the biggest stake in environmental protection, and so must become the driving force. Local communities, non-governmental organizations and businesses all must do their part. They cannot limit themselves simply to "supervision" and appeals to the authorities. They must expand into other avenues of appeal: public hearings, welfare lawsuits, enhanced media coverage and other voluntary activities.

But ultimate power does rest with the government. China's leaders need to make several concrete moves in order to move beyond rhetoric. They must give real power to environmental officials to implement existing laws and close gaping legal loopholes. This can only be done by introducing legal mechanisms to reward those who protect the environment, while making polluters pay; and by helping to unify the environmental watchdogs scattered across different sectors. Above all, a system needs to be established to monitor officials' performance in environmental as well as in economic terms.

China is dangerously near a crisis point. The country's enormous environmental debt will have to be paid, one way or another. China must exercise the foresight needed to begin paying this debt now, when it is still manageable, rather than allow it to accumulate and, ultimately, threaten to bankrupt us all.

Project Syndicate

Pan Yue is vice minister of China's State Environmental Protection Administration.

'YoungBlood3' launch

In the announcement "Behold the new Blood" published in this space yesterday, Dec. 2, the time of the launching of the book "YoungBlood3" was misstated. It will be at **4 p.m.**, (not 6 p.m.) on Dec. 9, Saturday, at PowerBooks Live! in Greenbelt 4, Makati City.

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TALK of the TOWN

Editor **Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.**

China rising, India shining

SINCE DENG XIAO PENG DECLARED A GENERATION AGO THAT "TO BE RICH IS glorious" and that "it doesn't matter if a cat is black or white so long as it catches mice," China has produced what is considered the most successful case of economic development in human history.

Over the past 25 years, its economy has expanded more than tenfold, making China the fastest-growing country in the world. It practically produces everything for the world market. As a result, China has accumulated about $1 trillion in foreign exchange reserves.

China's surging economy is like a vortex, sucking foreign investments and raw materials from near and far. From carmakers such as General Motors and Toyota to retailers like Wal-Mart, foreign companies are investing in the Middle Kingdom.

To secure raw materials like timber, mineral ore and oil for its industries, China is investing in the Philippines, Brazil and Sudan. It is building roads in Burma, Laos and Cambodia, and is granting them loans with conditions better than those offered by the World Bank.

Ever wonder where the missing manhole covers, P1 coins or pilfered telephone cables are going? To metal-hungry China.

India, for its part, has become the second fastest-growing country in the world over the past 15 years. India is known for its galloping service-driven economy, thanks to its call centers and software exports.

In the next 25 years, China and India are expected to become the world's dominant economies, a phenomenon that a former World Bank head considers "a return to form rather than a novelty."

'China has become a status quo power'

By Wang Gungwu

(This article is based on the notes taken by Juan V. Sarmiento Jr. while Wang was delivering a lecture titled "China: Economic Strength and Structural Weakness" at the 7th Asian-European Editors' Forum in Singapore on Oct. 5. The forum was organized by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.)

WHAT MADE CHINA'S ECONOMIC jump possible? There are several things that existed before that helped China's rapid economic expansion.

One is the strong risk-taking culture of the common people. Because a majority of the people have lived with uncertainty, they are ready to look for opportunities even if there are risks involved. The entrepreneurial risk-taking culture was not lost after 40 years of communism.

The Communist Party had earlier failed to realize China's agricultural potential.

Deng Xiao Peng's opening of the economy began by liberating the peasants from tight controls. The new freedom in the rural areas provides a major stimulus to kick-off other sectors of the economy.

Liberalization

Then, there's the number of people trained with the basic skills needed for an industrializing economy. In 1980, this was 20 times larger than it was in 1949 [the year the Communists won]. These people were given new encouragement and fresh capital and equipment as part of the liberalization starting after 1978.

The economic stimulus in the neighborhood—[the rapid economic development in] Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore—also is a factor. The people are fully aware of what the neighbors have achieved. If the neighbors could do it, why not China?

All these led to an economic miracle, but it does not come from nowhere. There is continuity with what China has and also what its revolution started.

Power structure's continuity

The power structure's continuity in China is more obvious. The political party today is a reformed version of something that had first been modeled on the Soviet party.

There is also continuity from Chinese history where power is based on victory on the battlefield. The Chinese accept the legitimacy of whoever wins on the battlefield. Victory sustained all dynasties.

Like the dynasties, the Communist Party of China (CPC) won the mandate of heaven. On that basis, the Communist Party believes that it has the authority to do anything that needs to be done to unify the country and consolidate its power.

Sons of Heaven

Like earlier Sons of Heaven, the CPC thinks it is right for the party to be above the law in the same way that emperors were above the law. Theirs was the tradition of rule by man rather than rule by law. But the Communist Party says it wants to move to the rule by law. In practice, the party has found it difficult to be consistent. The son of heaven is beyond the law.

It's a contradiction that is creating a lot of difficulties. For example, a CPC member accused of a crime goes first before the party. There the party judges him before he goes to court. This undermines a key principle of the rule of law.

Social unrest

As the economy moves forward, disturbances and peasant unrest have risen. [Many of the disturbances have been triggered by officials seizing land that people occupy or till without compensation. The seized lands are for factories or real estate development projects].

There have been local disturbances in all of Chinese history, but only a few, which were coupled with outside threat, succeeded. The central government that fell did so because it found itself fighting on many fronts.

The central government's strategy is to keep internal conflicts local and make friends abroad. There is no external threat right now. Because China has no real enemy today, it can concentrate on development and keep local conflicts in check.

Is China a threat to its neighbors? For the most part [of history], it was defending itself. It built the Great Wall to keep overland invaders out. But the wall did not stop the Mongols and later the Manchus from conquering China. All of China was under Mongol rule for nearly 100 years and under the Manchus for more than 250 years. It was the Mongols who had tried to conquer Korea, Japan and Java, and the Manchus who extended China's boundaries to make their lands safer from foreign conquest.

Sun Yat-sen pushed for nationalism to get rid of the Manchus on the principle that people have the right to rebel and overthrow rulers if they are governed badly. That, in a sense, is the Chinese idea of democracy.

International stage

Over the past 25 years, bright people in China have been studying the international system and have learned how it works. China will remain a player within the international system as long as it is good for China. The Chinese will resist moves to change the international system if the changes are not in China's interest. In a sense, China has become a status quo power.

What is the role of overseas Chinese? The country has been attracting huge investments from overseas. But the investment of the overseas Chinese is small. The bulk comes from Hong Kong and Taiwan. The Chinese overseas tycoons are investing in the interior because they cannot compete with Hong Kong and Taiwanese Chinese in the coastal areas of mainland China.

Identity crisis.

With the rapid economic development, the rural-based extended family is under threat. The one-child policy pursued by the government has undermined the deep-seated functions of Chinese families. All social values that the Chinese take pride in are under "threat." Many are now seeking anxiously for ways to preserve these values.

The Shanghai syndrome (as seen in the coastal areas) is the dominant feature of Chinese change—rapid acceptance of Western ideas of development at all levels. But the interior where 70 percent of the population lives does not feel comfortable with that syndrome.

For example, people in Xi'an City, the ancient capital of China for over 1,400 years—once its center of political power, culture and civilization—continue to harp about the values that lie at the heart of China. The Xi'an response is characterized by deep concern for China's heritage.

The interplay between the Shanghai syndrome and the Xi'an response must be watched as the Chinese are reforming toward a post revolution structure. The traditional past and the modernist revolution could be meshed together to produce a new system that is particularly suited to China's needs.

It's not economic revolution that will help China. It's not political structure either. The rise of China cannot be secured if its strengths and weaknesses are not balanced.

(Wang is the director of the East Asian Institute at the National University of Singapore. He was born in Surabaya, Indonesia in 1930, and grew up in Ipoh, Malaysia. He studied history in the University of Malaya, where he received both his Bachelor and Masters degrees. He holds a Ph.D from the University of London for his thesis on the structure of power in North China during the Five Dynasties.)

Prepare for Chinese and Indian dominance

WESTERN NATIONS MUST prepare for a future dominated by China and India, whose rapid economic rise will soon fundamentally alter the balance of power, former World Bank chief James Wolfensohn has warned.

Wealthy countries were failing to understand the impact of the inevitable growth of the two Asian powerhouses, Wolfensohn said in the 2006 Wallace Wurth Memorial Lecture at the University of New South Wales in Australia last week.

"It's a world that is going to be in the hands of these countries which we now call developing," said Australian-born Wolfensohn, who held the top job at the global development bank for a decade until last year.

Rich nations needed to try to capitalize on the inevitable emergence of what would become the engine of the world's economic activity before it was too late, he said.

"Most people in the rich countries don't really look at what's happening in these large developing countries," said Wolfensohn, who is now chair of Citigroup International Advisory Board and his own investment and advisory firm.

Within 25 years, the combined gross domestic products of China and India would exceed those of the Group of Seven wealthy nations, he said. "This is not a trivial advance, this is a monumental advance."

Wolfensohn said that somewhere between 2030 and 2040, China would become the largest economy in the world, leaving the United States behind.

By 2050, China's current $2 trillion GDP was set to balloon to $48.6 trillion, while that of India, whose economy weighs in at under $1 trillion, would hit $27 trillion, he said, citing projections by investment bank Goldman Sachs.

In comparison, the United States' $13-trillion income would expand to only $37 trillion—$10 trillion behind China.

"You will have in the growth of these countries a 22 times growth between now and the year 2050 and the current rich countries will grow maybe 2.5 times," he said.

In light of these forecasts, it was clear that Western nations and Australia were not investing enough in educating the next generation to be able to take advantage of the coming realignment, he said.

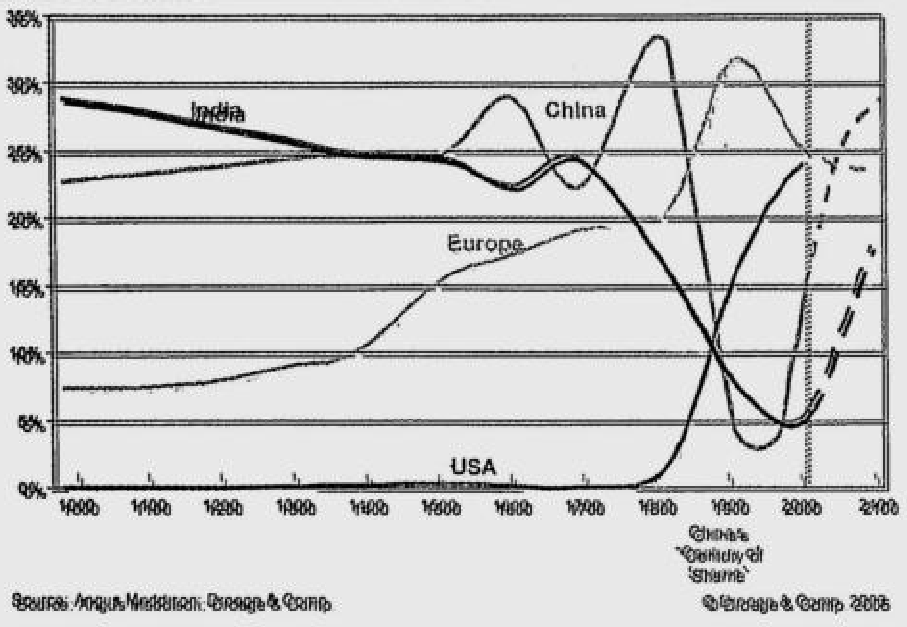
"The fact that not enough of our young people are preparing themselves with knowledge, experience, residence and language to deal certainly with China, although India has the benefit of an English language, it does seem to me that it presents a formidable challenge."

Wolfensohn pointed to both China's and India's recent substantial investments in Africa as an example of how the two emerging giants were exercising their increasing clout on the global stage.

"Within the last two weeks the world has been put on notice that Africa is no longer the basket case that everybody had historically thought it was but is now front and center in terms of development by India and China."

The phenomenal rally by the two countries was a return to form rather than a novelty, he said, as they together had accounted for 50 percent of global GDP from the 1500s until the industrial revolution reduced that to between 5 and 7 percent. *AFP*

For Asians, the shift only restores the historic GDP balance



Source: Angus Maddison; Droege & Comp.   © Droege & Comp. 2006

China rising …but so are the risks

● Economy grows at more than 10%	..But 17% of population still lives on less than $1 a day
● Industry growing at 22%	..But expansion creates overcapacities
● $170 billion in nonperforming loans (NPLs) transferred to asset management firms	...But still $900 billion in NPLs
● Minimum wage increased to RMB750 ($90)	But skilled wages in centers explode
● China spends 2.2% of GDP on R&D	..But most of that is project related
● $35 billion per annum to be spent on environment	...8 of 10 most polluted cities in the world are in China
● Emerging brands realize IPRP is useful	..But 90% of China's software still copied
● Chinese patent applications rising	..But 90% come from foreign-invested enterprises (FIEs) or joint ventures
● China's exports: $762 billion (+28% in 2005)	..But 58% of exports come from FIEs
● China produces 750,000 engineers per year	...But only 10% employable in western firms
● Building social security network	..But that requires $900 billion
● Chinese are getting more affluent	...But China will grow old before it gets rich

NOTE: THESE THREE TABLES WERE PART OF THE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION BY JOACHIM H. IHRCKE, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF DROEGE & COMP. SINGAPORE PTE LTD., AT THE 7TH ASIAN-EUROPEAN EDITORS' FORUM IN SINGAPORE.

India shining …but not all that glitters is gold

● Economy ($775 billion) grows at 7% to 8.5%	...But is 1/3 of China's $2.2 billion
● Spending on education up: 4% of GDP	...But 41% of people are illiterate
● Major government environmental initiatives	...But New Delhi is most polluted city in the world
● Per capita income rising 7% (to $260)	...But 35% of people live on less than $1 a day
● India produces 70,000 IT engineers per year	...But by 2010 shortfall of 150,000 IT engineers
● 54% of India's GDP comes from services	...But the sector feeds only 10% of the people
● India brought about world-class private firms	...But privatization has yet to come
● Investing 4.4% of GDP in infrastructure	...But China invested 25.7% per year
● Establish 180 special economic zones to bypass the License Raj	...But most are for tax cut, not productivity gain
● 20% of world's <24 year olds live in India	...Need to create even more jobs (9% unemployment rate)
● British Law	...Red tape, bureaucracy, corruption
● 400 million people speak "English"	...But only 75 million speak and write English well

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO/PAGE DESIGN BY ERNIE SAMBO

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The Lumad fight against a power plant

By Jeffrey M. Tupas
Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur

EVEN FROM AFAR, THE SOUND WAS DEAFENING as the waterfalls crashed into the catchment basin below and exploded into large foams and mists.

The view from the top was overwhelming as the villagers broke into a monotonous aria in an unfamiliar tongue as they slowly descended.

At the spot, a few meters away from the water basin, Apo Adoc Puroc appeared at home as he stiffened himself and faced the white water curtain, his face already wet. Everyone around him fell into silence and slowly, Apo Adoc started to mumble.

Apo Adoc is 106. He is the most respected and influential leader of the Bagobo-Tagabawa tribe in the far-flung village of Sitio Tudaya in Barangay Sibulan here.

His followers in tow, Apo Adoc braved the deep ravines and difficult trails to reach the Tudaya waterfalls for an important ritual he and the tribesmen only get to experience twice in a year.

Done during the first few months of the year and before it ends, the ritual is observed to appease, praise or ask the spirits and the highest god Manama for help and guidance.

On Nov. 23, Apo Adoc beseeched the gods of Tudaya for protection and guidance against a force that most of them feared the most—the hydroelectric plant which will be put up in the village.

Sacred place

While Apo Adoc was consumed in his invocation, Erlinda Gomia, who was standing on his right, broke into tears as if in a trance and mumbled something that sounded gibberish.

"They have been hurt so many times already. And whatever man plans to do that can destroy the sanctity of the place will suffer the wrath of the gods," said Laurito Balido who translated Gomia's mumblings.

The Tudaya waterfall, known to the natives as Samboangan, is the most sacred place for the Bagobo-Tabawas. It is where the followers of Apo Adoc, whose small village was named after the waterfall, celebrate their life as they believe that it is the dwelling place of their gods.

As natives who still believe in the deities, the waterfall is the place where they strengthen their faith in often silent and solitary visits or grand rituals.

A few years ago, during the long drought, the people of Sitio Tudaya were spared massive hunger experienced by most of their neighboring villages because their farms never dried up.

Apo Adoc said the gods saved their farms through the mist from the waterfalls. He believes that Tudaya is the god's promise to the people, something which if destroyed, could mean the devastation of their faith, their culture and tradition and their lives.

Construction

But starting January next year, the small village of Tudaya will perhaps be sleepless because of the loud shrills of the machines for the construction of a hydroelectric plant to be established by Hydro Electric Development Corp. (Hedcor), an Aboitiz-owned company. Hedcor is said to be the country's largest private developer of run-to-river, water-generated electricity.

The project will involve the construction of a two run-of-river plants using the waters from the Sibulan and Baroring Rivers. It will generate 230 million kilowatt-hour power to be distributed to the Davao Light and Electric Co., another Aboitiz subsidiary.

The project will affect the flow of the waterfall because of the construction of the Weir (a small overflow dam) just a kilometer away from the falls. Because of this, the flow of the waters will be diverted to the conveyance pipe, penstock and the turbine to generate water.

Worth P4.3 billion, the Aboitiz company considers the project as its largest investment in the power division.

During its operation, the company said their project will not only pay huge amount of realty and business taxes but will also provide the government with electrification fund equivalent to P0.0025 per kWh of the total electric sales of the power station and development and livelihood fund which is equivalent to P0.0025 per kWh of the total electricity sales will be shared by the province (25 percent), municipality (25 percent), barangay (20 percent), and the region (30 percent).

The company will also allot funds amounting to P0.0050 per kWh of the total electricity sales for reforestation, watershed management, and health and environmental enhancement.

The company also promised to grant yearly the community of the Bagobo-Tagabawas an amount equivalent to one centavo per kWh of the total electricity sales which will be paid after the first year of operation of the plants. After five years, the company will also add half centavo per kWh of the sales.

Road network

The construction of a 12.80-km road connecting the villages of Marawir and Lower Tudaya is also part of the package, along with the company's assistance for the reopening and rehabilitation and maintenance of the 16-km Darong-Sibulan-Bidaran road.

Roger Madi, a village councilor from Sitio Pogpog, said the company will construct a road network connecting the key spots of the village. He said the company will also provide jobs for 800 individual residents.

The jobs and the road were the very reason he signed the petition allowing the establishment of the hydroelectric plant in the village, which is the natives' ancestral domain. The village is located in what is considered an environmentally critical area (ECA) being inside the Mt. Apo National Park.

"All of us here agreed to the establishment of the project. We know that it will help us because it will provide us employment and the road which will enable us to transport our products to the market easily," Madi said.

Madi is not a resident of Sitio Tudaya but he claimed that all of the people in the village, identified as the directly affected area, agreed to it. He swore that not one from the residents and the tribal elders questioned and disapproved the project.

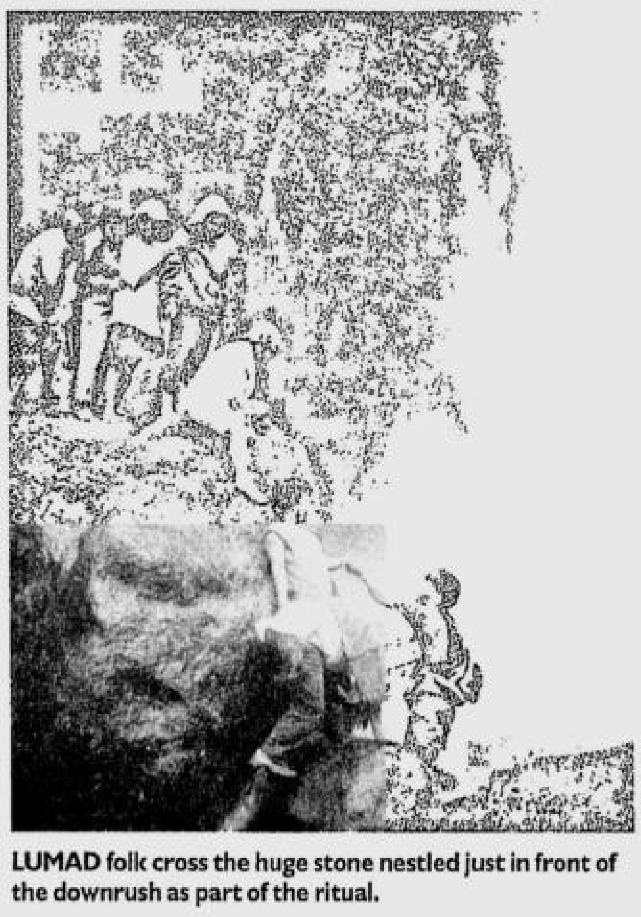
Campaign

But Apo Adoc refused to affix his signature in the campaign paper that circulated apparently to counter another signature campaign which opposed the Hedcor project.

Datu Rudy Agtag, one of those who backed the project and signed the certificate of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) issued to Hedcor in June last year, said this project could be the ultimate realization of the promise given to the people by the gods.

THE 106-YEAR-OLD Apo Adoc Puroc leading his flock at the Tudaya Falls to invoke the gods.

PHOTOS BY JEFFREY M. TUPAS



LUMAD folk cross the huge stone nestled just in front of the downrush as part of the ritual.

"There is a promise that this place will become a city. Is this the way for that promise to be realized? I believe that this land is sacred and it's up for the people to fulfill what has been promised," Agtag said.

But Apo Adoc believes otherwise. Speaking through a translator, Apo Adoc said the promise is not about material wealth and affluence but something that will benefit beyond the physical self of each of them. That promise, he said, can only be realized if the people respected the gifts of nature which also means the gift of life.

"The promise can never be realized or fulfilled by Hedcor," Apo Adoc said.

"If this is good for some, then so be it. They have the right to allow the project but I am against it because the gods are against it. If I cannot stop it, the gods can," Apo Adoc added.

> 'I am hoping that it will not be pushed through as the gods want it. This is land given to us and I hope it will remain as sacred as it is'

The acquisition of the company of the FPIC, supposedly after a series of consultations with the villagers, was questionable, according to Apo Adoc. The application, he said, disregarded the plight of the people and their belief and culture.

Disrespect

He said all consultations were done outside their village, something that only showed how the company and the people backing its power plant, disrespected them.

"Hedcor and some people who are not residents here insisted on the project. It was approved with the supposed assurance that we will not be affected. But we will be affected by it," Apo Adoc said clearly referring to Madi and other personalities who are backing the project.

In June last year, a memorandum of agreement was signed by some tribal elders, village officials, the National Commission on the Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and Hedcor. Apo Adoc and a number of his most trusted followers refused to be part of it.

In October last year, the NCIP through its chair Jannette Cansing Serrano, also issued Hedcor a compliance certificate of the FPIC and that the community has given its consent to the project.

The certification reiterated the responsibilities of the company to the government and the community.

In a letter to the officials of the town of Sta. Cruz, Hedcor president Rene Ronquillo, explained the extent of their project—from the reduction of the water flow in the Sibulan River and the Tudaya falls; desecration of the natives' worship area; disturbance to the wildlife and destruction of the watershed; and some safety issues.

Flow of water

Ronquillo admitted that the flow of the waterfall will be affected, a problem which will be remedied by the closure of the Sibulan intake for six hours each day from January until April.

He quoted their own hydrologic study which shows the sufficiency of the water "to maintain the splendid waterfall and feed the hydroelectric plant's requirement.

He also assured that their embankment will be built based on international standards as he dismissed fears that should there be a breakdown or leakage of the head pond, to be located at the back of an elementary school, the flash deluge could kill the children and village residents.

Ronquillo also admitted that their operation will indeed entail the cutting of trees and forest plants during the construction phase, but the company will be compelled to "improve the watershed for our own economic survival."

"It is generally accepted worldwide that hydropower plants do not consume water and therefore do not cause the loss of water resources. Instead we expect to improve the watershed area and surface run-off through reforestation and soil erosion control measures," he said.

"The water management plan has not yet been completed. This is because we intend to develop the watershed management plan together with the community and local government units once the project has been approved," he added.

But no matter how the company explains it, Apo Adoc could not be convinced.

"I am hoping that it will not be pushed through as the gods want it. This is a land given to us and I hope it will remain as sacred as it is," he said.

"If they will really insist on it, let them face the gods," he added.

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Create Mayon Commission, GMA urged

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO IS BEING urged to create a Mayon Commission that would be tasked to come up with plans to stop the further devastation of adjacent towns and cities from lahar and mud flows and determine whether any of these population centers should be abandoned.

The proposal was made by Albay Rep. Joey Salceda who likened the threat being faced by Albay to the dire situation of Pampanga, whose main urban centers—San Fernando and Angeles City—were also in danger of being swamped in the aftermath of the 1991 explosion of Mount Pinatubo. "The worst is yet to come for us," said Salceda in a phone interview. "For the first time, urban centers with a population of 1.2 million are being threatened directly."

"There is an urgent need for the President to sign an executive order forming a Mayon Commission that will come up and implement long term strategies for areas surrounding Mayon volcano. The evolving massive terrain orientation from Mayon's eruptions coupled with supertyphoons is creeping towards highly urbanized areas such as Daraga with Cagsawa to Busay to Culiat to Binitayan and Tagas that are in the poblacion," said Salceda.

While Mount Mayon has yet to make a big bang, Salceda said the series of eruptions and the batterings from consecutive howlers have had the same devastating effect of a major natural disaster on his hometown.

'We believe that the damage is probably second only to the 1814 millennium eruption of Mount Mayon which buried the entire town of Cagsawa and killed at least 1,200 people'

"You have to come here and see for yourself the extent of the damage, roads and neighborhoods, an entire barangay has been erased from the map. We believe that the damage is probably second only to the 1814 millennium eruption of Mount Mayon which buried the entire town of Cagsawa and killed at least 1,200 people," said Salceda.

"As in Pinatubo, the issue is saving the towns or relocating the people. For some, the decision is to move entire households to safer area," said Salceda.

The commission, he said, should include the country's leading minds in volcanology and seismology because their expertise is badly needed in assessing the future of a town or city in Albay. "We need another Ray Punongbayan to guide us," said Salceda referring to the late geologist (he died in 2005) who helped steer the country through its most violent natural disasters in the 1990s—the Luzon earthquake and the Pinatubo eruption.

The Mount Pinatubo Commission was granted nearly $580 million for the resettlement of the victims and construction of dikes to prevent further devastation from lahar flows.

EDISON Gaufo picks up clothes his wife had laid out on the ground to dry in Barangay Padang, Legazpi City. He carries his 3-year-old daughter Fiona tightly as she cries whenever they are separated. His older daughter, Michaela Kyle, 4, was swept away by rampaging waters and big boulders at the height of Typhoon "Reming" on Friday. He recovered her daughter, dead, a day after. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Donate salaries for 'Reming' survivors, groups appeal

LUCENA CITY—THE LEFTWING fisherfolk alliance Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) urged senators and congressmen to donate their December salaries and substantial portions of their pork barrel to thousands of victims of Typhoon "Reming" that devastated Albay and other Bicol provinces.

"We appeal to our lawmakers to cross party lines and extend help in rebuilding shattered lives and broken simple dreams in Bicol Region," said Pamalakaya information officer Gerry Albert Corpuz in an e-mailed statement.

On top of the request, the group also urged Malacañang to release the P6.2-B Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) of President Macapagal-Arroyo for relief and rehabilitation efforts of areas ravaged by Reming.

Yesterday, the President ordered the Department of Budget and Management to set aside P1 billion of her unused pork funds to bankroll relief and rehabilitation efforts of areas devastated by the supertyphoon.

But Corpuz said the P1 billion allocation set aside by President Arroyo was too small to accomplish needed material and logistical requirements for the relief and long-term rehabilitation of Bicol.

"The President can order the release of the entire unused pork amounting to P6.2 billion. It would be better if Malacañang gave it all rather than keep the remaining inside the presidential vault for corruption and other sinister agenda," he said.

The militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) also urged the government to increase the price of copra from P16 to at least P20 or equal to the price of a kilo of rice.

"This would help coconut farmers who were able to harvest to get by at least after the storm," Ka Willy Marbella, KMP internal deputy secretary, said in a statement.

He said they have long been campaigning for an increase in the price of copra and the scrapping of the "resikada" so that the income of small coconut farmers will increase.

"It is high time now that this is immediately implemented and maintained for the welfare of the coconut industry and the farming sector," Marbella said.

Marbella noted that the hardest hit by Reming were small coconut farmers, who have yet to recover from the past destruction of Typhoon "Milenyo."

"It would take at least 18 months for them to be back on track," he said.

Marbella said KMP has mobilized its members to help in relief and rescue operations in Southern Luzon.

"The KMP has organized "bayanihan" (self-help) teams to help in the clearing, rescue and relief operations. We just hope that there are more survivors that we can find. We are also checking if all our members are intact and safe," he added.

Pamalakaya also asked Malacañang to immediately order the suspension of military operations in areas ravaged by Reming to allow the smooth entry of relief and rehabilitation activities. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Farmers, drivers, police forge peace on traffic issues in Halsema Highway

By Delmar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE Christmas season started well for the province's vegetable industry when farmers, vegetable truck drivers and policemen forged a compromise on how to deal with traffic and vehicle violations along the Halsema Highway, the province's major vegetable route.

The compromise, drawn in a recent dialogue at the vegetable trading post here, aimed to eliminate the farmers' complaints of extortion by members of the regional Traffic Management Group and to educate drivers on vehicle rules to avoid the confiscation of their licenses.

Under the scheme, a driver caught violating a trivial offense will be asked to sign a logbook instead of surrendering his license. The logbook will record the violation.

The driver, however, will be warned not to commit the same offense again or he will be immediately issued a temporary operator's permit (TOP).

Dirty plates, not wearing seatbelts and driving in slippers are considered light or trivial violations.

"But the rule will not apply to major violations like nonregistration of vehicle, driving without license and operating engines that do not tally with the vehicles' registration papers," said Senior Supt. Jesus Cambay Jr., Cordillera TMG chief.

More than 200 trucks and passenger vans travel daily along Halsema, the province's main road network used to transport vegetables from Tublay, Atok, Buguias, Mankayan, Bakun and Kibungan towns to the trading post here.

During the dialogue, members of the Benguet Farmers Federation Inc. (BFFI), Benguet Truck Drivers Association (BTDA) and Benguet Truckers and Traders Association (BTTA), three van associations, and local officials accused the TMG of extortion for every violation found.

They said TMG members, who do not sometimes wear their nameplates or hide in inconspicuous areas along the road, were fond of conducting "fishing expeditions" to flush out even the most trivial offenses.

"We are forced to give money since we do not want to delay our trip," the drivers said.

But Cambay said drivers must ensure that they and their trucks have complied with traffic rules to give no reason for the TMG to accost them.

"There is no extortion if there is no violation," he said.

But Cambay said he would conduct an investigation on the alleged extortion, adding that all TMG operations in the province would have to be coordinated with the local police or mayors.

He declined the farmers' request for a moratorium on arrests for the Christmas season since that would mean an abandonment of the TMG's mandate to implement antihijacking and land transportation laws.

He said he was aware that TMG men were known as "devils of the road."

"But I will try my best to change that image. I will make them the angels of the highway," he said.

Girl needs help for heart surgery

DAVAO CITY—WHEN SHE was only 9 months old, Addie Beatrix Velasco was diagnosed with a rare congenital heart disease known as Cor Triatriatum of the left atrium. She has been in and out of the hospital for treatment of primary complex.

Addie, now 4-year-old, was admitted again at a local hospital here last month because of her acute bronchopneumonia. She underwent a series of tests and X-ray three to four times in just one week.

"It was later discovered that her heart problem was the reason for her ailment. Her heart can't pump normally which causes her lungs to accumulate liquid," Larry Velasco, Addie's father told the INQUIRER.

The family was advised by Addie's cardiologist that she should undergo corrective heart surgery as soon as possible at the Philippine Heart Center to avoid further complications.

"As a mere employee of the government with an earning just enough for my family's needs, Addie's possible operation is just too big for me," Larry told the INQUIRER.

"I don't know if this would be the right thing to do (ask help from other people). But I have been thinking about this for some weeks now. Her medical procedure alone will cost about P400,000 to P500,000," he added.

ADDIE Beatrix Velasco, child with rare congenital heart disease. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Larry and Belen works at the Air Transportation Office (ATO) here.

They report for work at the Davao International Airport-ATO Control Tower on different shifts and take turns attending to their daughter's need when they are on day-off.

Larry said he already asked financial assistance from the mayor, congressmen and Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office but to no avail.

"Addie is very attentive and observant. She is in nursery Level-1 now. We just want to give her the best. We hope and pray that this delicate operation will surely go a long way in saving and extending our daughter's life and maybe the best Christmas gift for her," Larry told the INQUIRER.

For those who want to lend their hands to the family, Larry can be reached through his mobile phone number 0920-9048894.

ARMM stays fishing ban in Lake Lanao due to planktons

COTABATO CITY—THE AUTONOMOUS Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) has stayed its fishing ban on Lake Lanao because of the massive water surface formation of prey organisms called "plankton bloom."

Earlier, ARMM Agriculture Secretary Sajid Druz Ali lowered the alert level on the lake's photosynthetic bacteria contamination, owing to improving water sampling during the recent weeks.

ARMM Fishery director Keise Usman on Thursday said a weekly sampling on the lake water showed declining water pH readings from 8.6 to 5, which is the pH normal level for water.

The pH indicators measure acid content in substance for pH readings of less than 5, and alkaline content with pH levels above 5, officials said.

A team of experts said the lake water's dissolved oxygen was recorded low last week at 6.95 milligram per liter (mg/L); carbon dioxide, 55 mg/L; phosphate 0.25 mg/L at a warmer temperature of 27.6 degree centigrade and a transparency level of roughly 1.22 meters or 4 feet from water surface.

This means that the lake is heavily muddled at very low oxygen content with which fish species survive, said Ishak Paguital, head of DAF-ARMM's office of special concerns.

But more dangerous is the natural increase in mass of tiny prey animals and plants causing a phenomenon called "plankton bloom."

This happens when the usual volume of fish feeding on them at water surface sharply declines, explained an expert from the Mindanao State University College of Fisheries.

"Adverse effects of the 'plankton bloom' to humans and animals were found to be toxins (harmful to) the skin, sensitive membranes and liver and make the person more susceptible to other diseases. Children and (persons having) liver problem (symptoms) may be more affected," said fish health officer Rhodora Cheryl Dimasicil in her report to DAF-ARMM's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

Officials have initially blamed this phenomenon on recent downpour triggered by recent typhoons, inundating farmlands and drained along farm chemicals onto the lake.

Ali said ban on lake fishing and domestic use of the lake water had to be imposed in coordination with local officials and authorities.

Janic Musali, assistant director of ARMM-DAF BFAR, said the phenomenon could not be artificially remedied. She said although there has been a cycle of recurrence in recent decades, normalcy had been naturally restored. But dwellers nearby, she added, would have to do their part in protecting the lake from contamination.

The water analysis has been conducted by a convergent team from ARMM-DAF; the BFAR of the Department of Agriculture in Northern Mindanao and the MSU College of Fisheries in Naawan, Misamis Oriental.

MSU-Naawan specialists identified the harmful photosynthetic bacteria in the species of Cyanobacteria Nostoc. In layman's term, Cynobacteria is usually identified as green and blue algae, a kind of grass floating on seas or lakes that are eaten by fish and aquatic animals. *Nash B. Maulana, Inquirer Mindanao*

Not enough water added to Angat dam

By Norman Bordadora

INCREASES IN THE WATER LEVEL at Angat Dam as a result of the rains brought by Supertyphoon "Reming" will first benefit the farms of Central Luzon before they reach the taps of Metro Manila, the National Water Resources Board said yesterday.

Ramon Alikpala, executive director of the NWRB, said the slight increase in the water level at the dam that supplies the irrigation needs of Pampanga and Bulacan farms and businesses and residences in Metro Manila was still not enough.

"At this stage, we should already be saving water because the ideal water level for Angat Dam is 212 meters by the end of December. This is because by January, the assumption is there'll be no more rain," Alikpala said.

The Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said that as of 6 a.m. yesterday, the water level at Angat Dam was at 202.7 meters, almost 10 meters short of the ideal needed by the NWRB for all sectors to be satisfied.

"A 212-meter water level is needed by January so that there will be enough for everybody. Even if we have this slight increase, it is less than the ideal," Alikpala said.

He said the first to benefit from the increase would be the agriculture sector in Central Luzon.

Effects of El Niño

He said some 20,000 hectares of farms had been initially identified by the NWRB as beneficiaries of its water supply in the face of a water shortage.

With the slight increase as a result of Reming's heavy rains, "that number of (hectares) may become slightly higher," Alikpala said.

"We expect the El Niño to last until June next year. So we want the farmers to have the opportunity to generate more income because they might not have a chance to plant (until the second semester of 2007)," Alikpala said.

202.7 meters and 201 meters

The INQUIRER reported the increase in the Angat water level to 202.7 meters as a result of Reming's rains, in its Saturday edition, based on a 5 p.m. Pagasa press briefing on Friday.

A separate INQUIRER story, also on Saturday, reported officials of the National Irrigation Administration as saying that the water level still stood at 201 meters.

The lower 201-meter figure was based on a statement given by NIA officials to the INQUIRER hours before Pagasa gave its afternoon update.

Tropical depression will do

Nathaniel Cruz, Pagasa's weather branch chief, said yesterday that Reming may have brought more than 400 millimeters of rains but this did not directly fall on the watershed leading to Angat Dam.

Cruz said Pagasa expected one more weather disturbance to hit the country in December.

Cruz, however, added that the country did not need a fullblown storm or a typhoon to satisfy the water requirements in Angat

"Sometimes, all they bring are strong winds but have little rainfall," Cruz said.

"Dam managers say that even a low pressure area or a tropical depression can bring enough rains to make up for the deficit in water level needed if they fall directly over the dam," he said.

'It was as if ...

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the pounding which the people in the area received from Supertyphoon "Reming" Thursday night.

Tan said the battering started as early as 7 p.m. and the people in his house prepared to evacuate to a sturdier place just 50 meters away.

"Before we could move out, our roof was ripped apart," he said.

Alden Manrique, an architect, said Reming's winds were so powerful that his house, although made of concrete materials, shook as if an earthquake had struck the town.

"All I could do was watch as pieces of GI sheets and tree branches flew," Manrique said.

The Sangguniang Panlalawigan has declared Marinduque in a state of calamity. Initial assessment showed around 1,000 families lost their homes.

At least two people died during Reming's onslaught.

Damage was estimated at at least P100 million.

"Our coconut trees which our people greatly rely on for livelihood were practically wiped out," said provincial board member Alan Nepomuceno.

In disbelief

He said Reming's winds lashed Marinduque until the wee hours of Friday.

Tan said he and other residents of Santa Cruz were in disbelief the following morning after seeing the destruction caused by the typhoon.

Twisted roofs and metal from the municipal building and adjacent houses littered the town plaza. Office equipment and important government files lay in the water.

The post office building where Tan and his family took refuge was damaged. The newly renovated municipal gymnasium, the only one in the province, was wrecked, its walls and roof ripped apart.

Residents scavenged through heaps of trash and fallen trees looking for iron sheets to replace the roofs of their houses blown away by Reming.

Lifetime savings lost

Victor Alandy, a seaman, was among those who ended up without a roof over his head.

"I saved for this house for almost 20 years ... In a few hours, the typhoon rendered it useless," said Alandy.

About 100 houses in the poblacion of Santa Cruz were stripped of their roofs.

The Bahay ng Bayan which houses the offices of the local government was greatly damaged. Its roof was ripped off by the strong winds and was hurled 30 meters to the town plaza.

Twisted roofs and metal from adjacent buildings and houses still littered the plaza.

Barangay Lapu-Lapu, Santa Cruz's most populated village, had the most number of wrecked homes. Around 50 families in the village were left homeless.

Same sad story

Two days after Reming struck, the people of Marinduque were rebuilding their lives, their hopes high that Christmas would not be bleak for them at all.

It was the same sad story in Boac.

"Thousands of people were traumatized, especially the elderly and the children," said Eter Jabal, 76, of the coastal village of Laylay, Boac.

Jabal said Reming was the strongest typhoon to hit Marinduque in more than 70 years.

"Based on my experience, this is worse than typhoons Herming and Sisang that hit us in 1990," Jabal added.

Dead on arrival

As of 9 a.m. Saturday, the provincial disaster council had reported two deaths in the town of Mogpog.

Dr. Gerry Caballes, provincial hospital administrator, said the two casualties were actually sick people from a remote village but their relatives were not able to bring them in time to the provincial hospital because of the impassable roads.

When the patients finally reached the hospital, they were declared dead on arrival.

Four fishermen were rescued when their fishing boat was rammed by a bigger boat in the seas off Barangay Balanacan.

The town of Torrijos remained isolated because of landslides and fallen trees blocking the roads.

Power blackouts

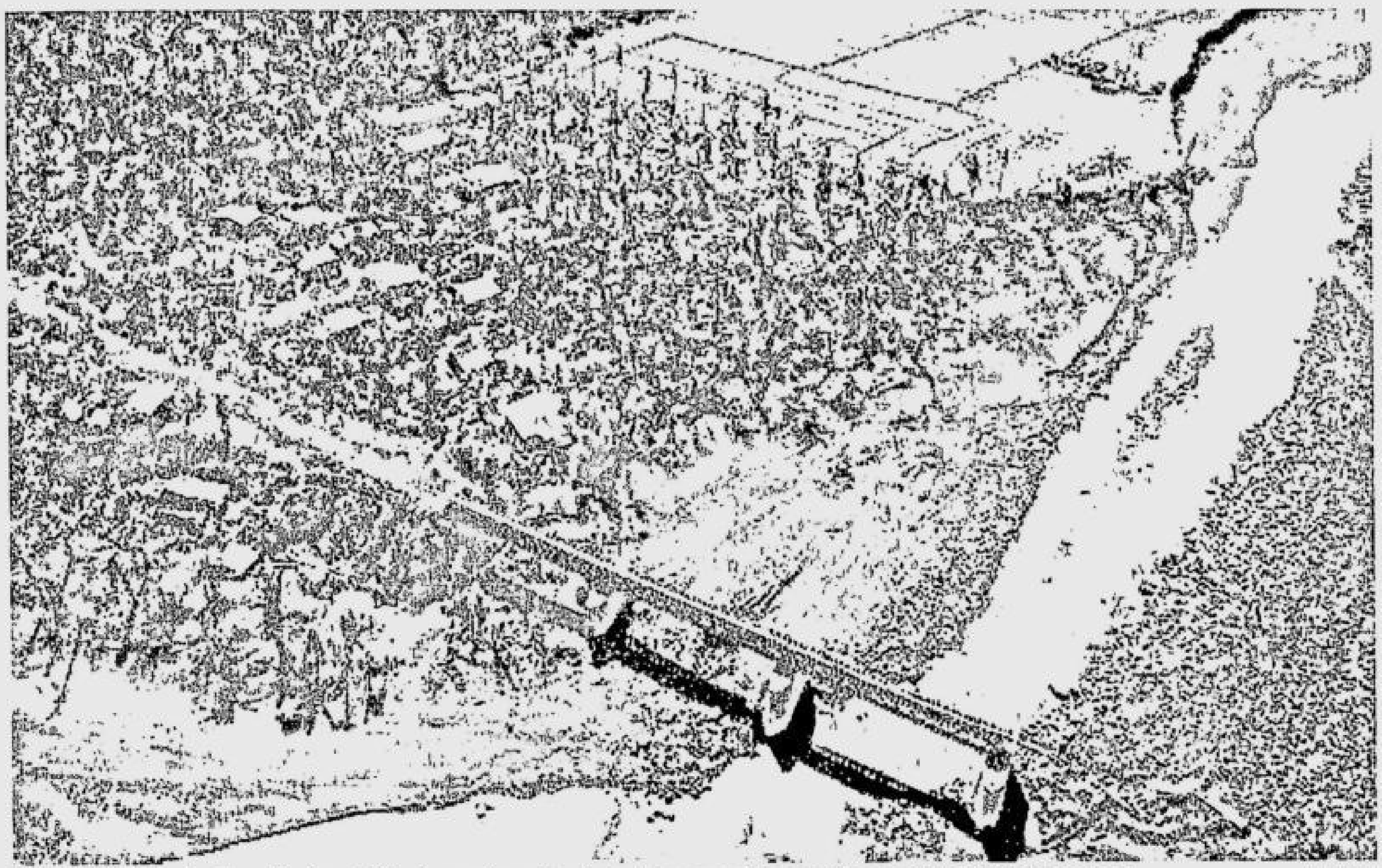
A local electric cooperative official has estimated that it will take around a month to fully restore electricity in the province.

Gov. Carmencita Reyes and some provincial officials and employees distributed 2,000 bags of relief goods to affected families along the coastal barangays of Boac, Gasan and Buenavista.

Ironically, most of the 216 barangay leaders of Marinduque were not able to personally attend to the needs of their constituents as they were stranded in Talao Talao Port in Lucena City, Quezon, after sea travel was suspended as early as Wednesday afternoon.

The group, including leaders of the Sangguniang Kabataan, had attended a conference sponsored by the Liga ng mga Barangay ng Pilipinas.

DARKEST HOUR. Myrna Sanchez, 23, and children Anel, 1, and Monique, 4, find shelter near the highway, with only a candle to light up their life, after their house was blown away by the supertyphoon in Polangi, Albay. EDWIN BACASMAS



MUDVILLE. The deadly path of mudslides is seen from the air in Albay, one of the provinces hardest hit by "Reming." JESS YUSON

Up to 700 feared dead

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"Six hundred to 700 people are feared dead," Gordon told reporters on the plane flying him back to Manila.

Padang was one of 17 barangays swamped by volcanic mud and rocks in six municipalities of Albay.

Reming's 5-hour fury also caused widespread floods and power outages, knocked out telecommunications, brought transportation in many areas to a standstill, and affected a total of 800,000 people in 12 provinces.

"Affected" refers to people who have lost their homes, whose houses are flooded or damaged, or who have lost their means of livelihood.

The casualty toll released by the National Disaster Coordinating Center in its 7 p.m. update put the number of dead at 303, including 285 in Albay, which bore the brunt of Reming's gusts of 265 kph.

Ten people died in Camarines Sur, five in Catanduanes, two in Oriental Mindoro and one in Quezon, the NDCC said.

The number of missing stood at 295. Some 500 others were injured.

Everyone puzzled

About 45,000 people fled evacuation centers as Reming destroyed or damaged some 120,000 houses.

The rivers of mud and rocks that thundered down from Mayon Volcano at the height of the typhoon were part of the massive deposits of volcanic debris—estimated at 140 million cubic meters— deposited on the volcano's slopes by its series of eruptions.

Weather specialists said the 466 mm of rainfall dumped by Reming surpassed the 370 mm poured by a previous typhoon on Infanta, Quezon.

The "overwhelming phenomenon" of the heavy rainfall was beyond disaster officials' capability "even if we prepare," Albay's top relief officer Cedric Daep told reporters.

The 17 barangays swamped by mud were in the towns of Pio Duran, Guinobatan, Camalig, Daraga, Legazpi City and Rapu-Rapu, officials said.

In Padang, as in other smothered mountainside villages, rescuers yesterday shoveled away mud and boulders to try to recover bodies.

The heavy stench added to their miseries.

Foul odor from decaying bodies in Barangay Busay could be smelled as far as Barangay Salugan in nearby Camalig town, Maj. Ramon Rosario said.

Rosario recounted how his men dug up an entire family inside one house. Using shovels and bare hands, the soldiers dug to a depth of five feet before making their macabre discovery.

Legazpi City Mayor Noel Rosal seemed as puzzled as many of the villagers over what brought the destruction.

"We weren't expecting this," he said. He said city officials anticipated flood and mudflows from Mayon to follow the course of the river, but they didn't.

"The mudflow descended on the village, not on the river. There must be something really wrong," Rosal said.

Villagers pointed at roofs jutting out of mud and boulders and said they were sure that there were people under them—dying if not already dead.

Joseph Manjares, an official of the PNRC chapter in Albay, said that based on projections, the number of missing might reach 769.

All that some of the villagers could remember of that scary Thursday was the sound—the terrifying *bam, bam* of boulders crashing down as floodwaters carried them from the slopes of the volcano, the *whooooosh* of the winds and human voices barely audible over the noise of nature's wrath.

"We couldn't hear each other," said Lordito Bautista, whose family was among about 10 who took shelter on the roof of a cement factory.

"But I could hear women and children shouting. I couldn't hear what they were shouting about but I was sure they were crying for help. All I could hear was the sound of boulder hitting boulder."

"That was where we survived," Bautista said, pointing to the roof that was all that could be seen of the cement factory.

Some villagers recalled watching helplessly as people clinging to trees lost their grip and fell into floodwaters that they said reached the height of a two-story house.

Jesus Almayda, a village official, said he was on the roof of his house and saw bodies being swept away in the water like logs.

People pointed to a roof that was all that stood out in a pile of mud, sand and rocks at one end of the village.

"Twenty people died there," one man shouted at reporters and cameramen.

The man said floods swept the villagers to the house where, seconds later, boulders and mud followed and buried them.

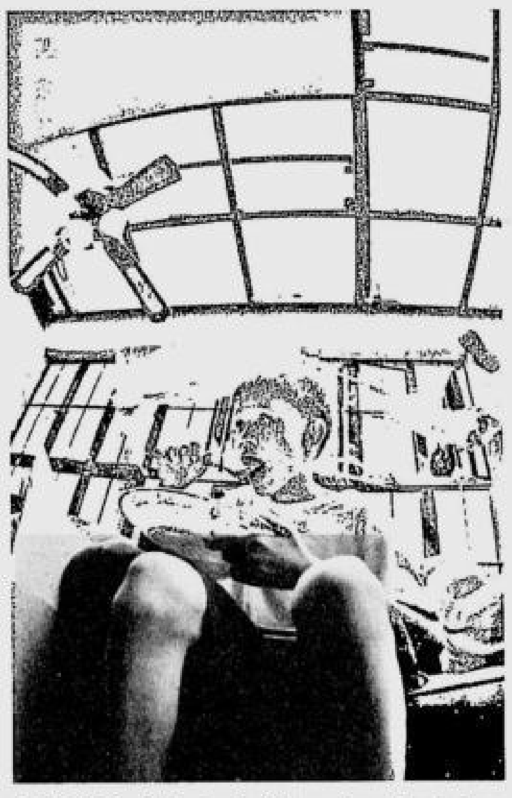
Some villagers said they wanted to run away, but a wall of water rushing to them forced them to stay indoors.

That was what the family of John Louie Belon tried to do.

"We tried twice to just get out," said his mother, who would not give her name.

She said the family wanted to try a third time to leave the house, but the waters were coming fast.

"So we just climbed our roof," she said.



LUNCH for John Louie Biluno is under leaden skies after the roof of his home in Padang, Legazpi City, was blown away at the height of the supertyphoon. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

When the water subsided and the mud dried, the family saw what was left of their belongings—a pair of sofas, spoons and forks caked in mud, a set of dusty plates, and a pool of water in the middle of what used to be a living room.

As officials and reporters wound their way into the village, the Belons were laying muddied clothes, kitchen ware, bed sheets and pillows out in the sun to dry.

"We want to build a new house in another place," said the mother. "We're afraid of this place now."

There was no way of knowing for sure how many bodies the 20-foot-high pile of volcanic materials were holding.

"We don't have the equipment (to dig through the rubble)," said the mayor, "but we will surely retrieve their bodies."

City officials said that in this village alone, at least 41 people were dead. At least 141 others were missing, believed to be underneath the mountain of debris where there used to be roads and communities.

At the lone funeral parlor here, a white board lists the names of 12 dead.

Inside a small room that served as a morgue, the bodies of four children, a woman and a man were covered with cloths.

Their names were not on the list yet. They had not been identified.

Reserved for the dead

A garage was emptied of vehicles to make way for white coffins.

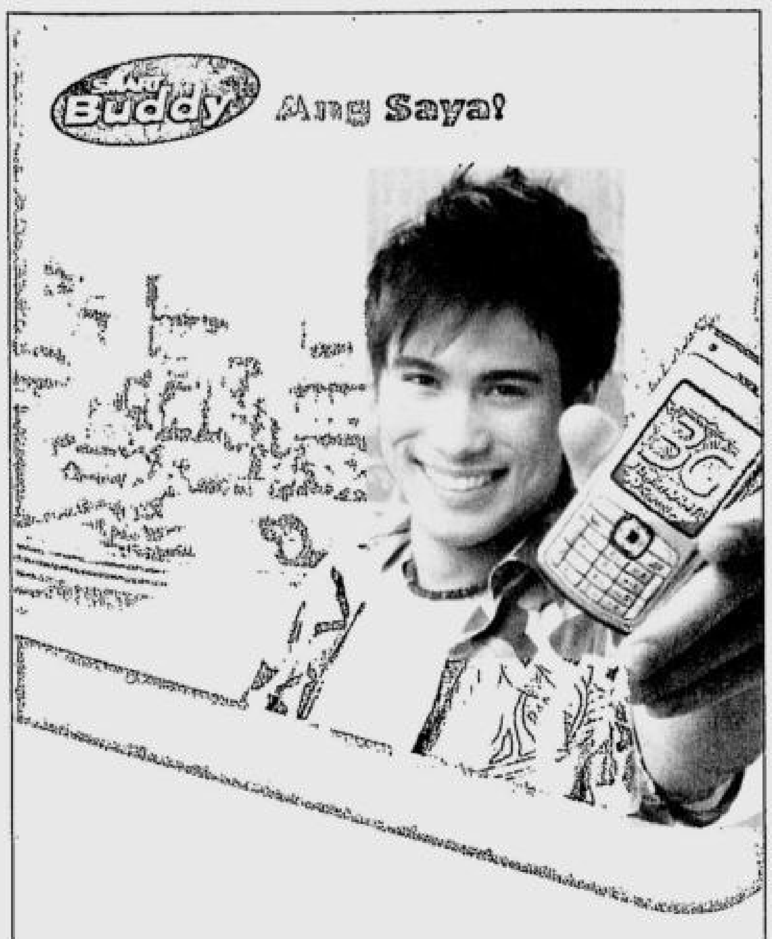
"These are reserved. These are still empty, but reserved (for the dead)," said one funeral parlor worker.

At a larger funeral parlor outside the village, bodies were being sprayed with formalin, a commodity that Mayor Rosal said the city might run out of soon.

One of the survivors, Silangan Santander, 21, attended funeral services for her brother, Larry.

Only Larry's lower torso and legs were found near the sea. *With a report from Alcuin Papa Ephraim Aguilar and Bobby Q. Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon, and AP*

Buddy Ang Saya!



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2. Click on **"Email"**.
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7. You can now send and receive Emails from your phone.

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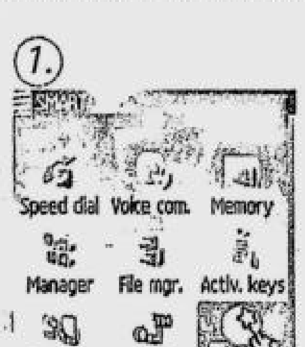

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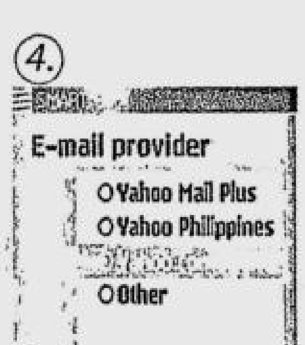

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SMART TAYO

Hot Beermen trip Aces

Tugade, Hontiveros shine for San Miguel

By Musong R. Castillo

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—SAN MIGUEL TRIumphed for the third straight time while snapping a three-game Alaska run last night after prevailing over the Aces, 103-99, in an out-of-town game of the Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup at the Lagao gymnasium here.

In a matchup between two of the hottest teams in the tournament, the Beermen took command early before holding off the game Aces in the second half and in a wild endgame to rise to 9-5 overall, good for a third place tie with idle Red Bull.

Sta. Lucia and Barangay Ginebra continue to be tied for the lead at 9-4 and will be facing separate foes today when elimination round action returns to the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

The Beermen zoomed to leads of as many as 19 points early, only to be threatened once again near the end of the first half with a 21-8 Alaska run that had San Miguel settling for a 55-49 bubble.

Alaska dropped to solo eighth with the loss, its eighth in 13 overall games, but only its second in the last six after opening up with a 1-6 card tainted by a five-game losing streak.

Only Welcoat and Coca-Cola, who have 3-11 cards, have worse records than the Aces.

From six up at the start of the second half, the Beermen restored a 13-point bubble in the third period, the first time after two Lordy Tugade triples and a short stab made it 72-59, before the pesky Aces battled back yet again to creep within three, 81-78, with 9:41 left.

Dondon Hontiveros and Lordy Tugade, who scored 16 points on Wednesday, both scored 20 to pace the Beermen, who got just 10 points from the high-scoring Danny Seigle.

Hontiveros missed just two of 10 attempts from the field, while Tugade, a critical mid-season acquisition from Red Bull, made 7-of-15 shots.

Danny Ildefonso was held down to just seven markers by the Alaska defense inside, but the two-time MVP collared 17 night-high rebounds.

Nic Belasco and Willie Miller shared team honors for the Aces with 20 each, while Tony dela Cruz and Sonny Thoss tossed in 14 and 13, respectively. John Ferriols and Cariaso chipped in 11 each.

Meanwhile, Ginebra takes the floor first at 4:05 p.m., seeking a fourth straight victory against athletic Air21, even as the Realtors clash with on-and-off Talk 'N Text in the 6:30 p.m. contest.

Despite coach Jong Uichico's protestations of his Kings not playing hard enough on each given night, Ginebra is tipped to nail win No. 10 in 14 games and inch closer towards an outright semifinal seat.

This will be the same objective the Realtors will be chasing later, though they will be coming into the game fresh from blowing composure and a 16-point lead on Wednesday before bowing to San Miguel, 113-98.

Uichico, since the start of the tournament, has not been that happy even with a lineup that could pass as an All-Star team, continuously telling his player to come to outings with their A-Games.

"(Our effort) leaves a lot to be desired," the soft-spoken mentor had said. "It's like we don't take our playing (the game) seriously. We just can't switch it on and off."

Uichico was hardly impressed despite thumping Welcoat by 21 on Wednesday.

STANDINGS	W	L
Sta. Lucia	9	4
Ginebra	9	4
Red Bull	9	5
San Miguel	9	5
Purefoods	8	6
Talk 'N Text	7	7
Air21	6	7
Alaska	5	8
Welcoat	3	11
Coca-Cola	3	11

GAMES TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:05 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Air21
6:30 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Talk 'N Text

The scores:

SAN MIGUEL 103—Hontiveros 20, Tugade 20, Racela 14, Seigle 10, Ildefonso 7, Adducul 6, Calaguio 6, Pena 6, Wilson 5, Tenorio 5, Gonzales 4, Espinas 0.

ALASKA 99—Belasco 20, Miller 20, Dela Cruz 14, Thoss 13, Ferriols 11, Cariaso 11, Bajar 3, Singson 3, Juinio 2, Laure 2.

Quarters: 31-20, 55-49, 81-73, 103-99.

Quiñahan lifts Mail and More past Sista

GAMES TUESDAY (*Letran Gym*)
2 p.m.—Mail and More vs Magnolia
4 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Toyota Otis

By Jasmine W. Payo

JR QUIÑAHAN AND RONJAY BUENAFE sparked Mail and More's early charge to stun the second-running Sista Super Sealers, 65-58, in the PBL Silver Cup yesterday at the Emilio Aguinaldo College Gym.

The beefy Quiñahan finally lived up to his billing to finish with 16 points, nine rebounds, four assists and two blocks after mediocre performances in previous outings.

Buenafe contributed 10 markers off the bench for the well-rested Comets.

"Our nine-day break, we made it to into our advantage," said Comets coach Lawrence Chongson. "We practiced every day, even if there was a typhoon, we didn't take a break."

The Comets threw away a double-digit cushion that grew by as many as 18 points, 28-10, in the second quarter.

"Basically, it's maturity (that we're working on)," added Chongson.

Earlier, Ariel Capus and Al Magpayo took the cudgels in the closing minutes to lead the TeleTech Titans to a 68-61 triumph over the Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala Moneymen.

Capus topscored with 25 points, including a jumper that spread the deficit to 65-56 at the 1:28 mark in the fourth period.

Magpayo's key triple in the final two-minute frame also helped subdue a late surge by the Moneymen, who chipped at the Titans' 20-point advantage, 49-29, behind Ken Bono and Macky Escalona.

"We had a hard time with their (defensive) trap, but we were able to [solve it]," said Titans coach Jerry Codiñera.

Marcy Arellano and Gilbert Malabanan pushed the Sealers within three points, 61-58, with just three minutes left.

But the Sealers, still in second place at 3-2, failed to sustain the comeback.

TeleTech now shares fourth place with Cebuana Lhuillier and Mail and More at 2-2.

The scores:

First Game

TELETECH 68—Capus 25, Latoreno 10, Mercado 9, Magpayo 7, Tan 7, Guerrero 4, Villamin 3, Valenzuela 2, Labagala 2, Concha 2, Estrada 1, Grijaldo 0.

CEBUANA LHUILLIER 61—Escalona 12, Dela Cuesta 11, Bono 11, Dulay 10, Santos 8, Yee 3, Abadia 3, Viardo 2, Gonzales 1, Kramer 0.

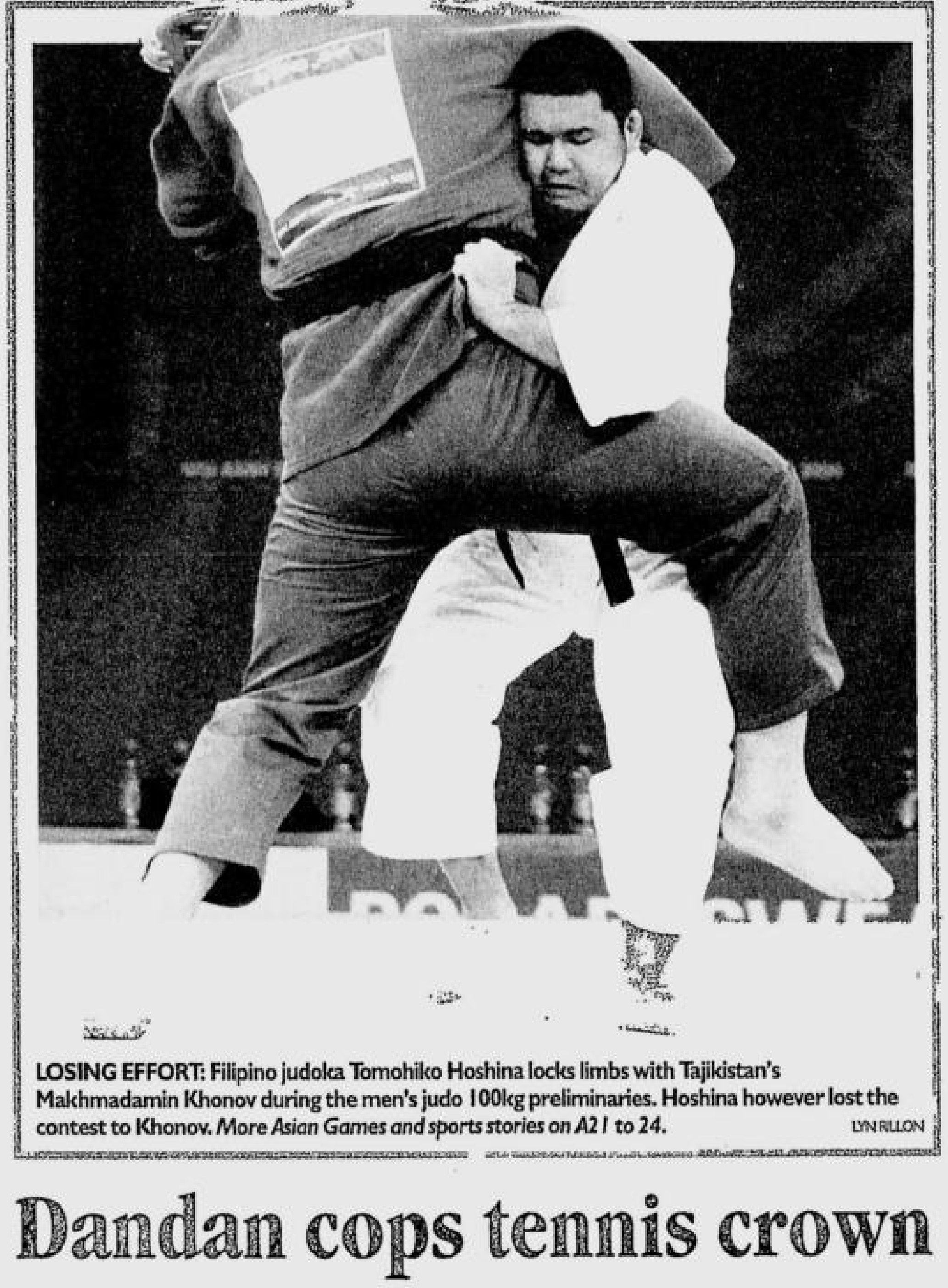
Quarters: 13-9, 38-22, 53-38, 68-61

Second Game

MAIL AND MORE 65—Quiñahan 16, Buenafe 10, Bravo 8, David 6, Viray 6, Yambao 6, Espiritu 5, Pribhdas 4, Del Rosario 2, Coyukang 2, Te 0, Cañizares 0, Ballesteros 0, Aquino 0.

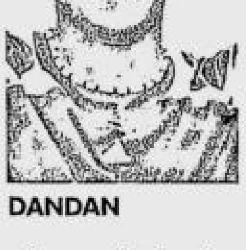
SISTA 58—Malabanan 12, Arellano 10, Bonus 7, Alfad 6, Misa 6, Saldua 4, Gregorio 4, Ebuen 4, Bauzon 3, Robles 2, Piñera 0.

Quarters: 20-8, 36-20, 52-44, 65-58

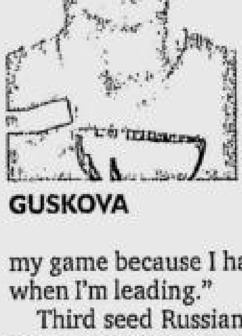


LOSING EFFORT: Filipino judoka Tomohiko Hoshina locks limbs with Tajikistan's Makhmadamin Khonov during the men's judo 100kg preliminaries. Hoshina however lost the contest to Khonov. *More Asian Games and sports stories on A21 to 24.* LYN RILLON

Dandan cops tennis crown



DANDAN



GUSKOVA

FILIPINO TOP SEED Kyle Joshua Dandan outplayed second seed Martin Studeny of Czech Republic, 7-5, 7-5, yesterday to capture the boys' singles title in the first leg of the Phinma-International Tennis Federation (ITF) Juniors Championships at the Ynares Socio-Cultural Sports Center in Pasig City.

It was the second title this year for Dandan after winning in Malaysia three months ago. He also had a runnerup finish in Bangladesh last January.

"It feels good to win a tournament in front of your countrymen," said the 17-year-old Dandan, who bannered the RP Junior Davis Cup in the World Group qualifying two years ago. "This victory is for the Philippines."

The 6-foot-2 Studeny, playing in his first-ever final match, banked on his strong forehand to take a 5-3 lead in the first set before Dandan rallied to win the next four games and the set.

Studeny, doubles champion in Hungary last May, fought hard in the second set, clawing back from 0-2 to post a 4-3 advantage. Dandan grabbed the lead at 5-3 with a break in the ninth game but Studeny broke back in the next game to tie the count at 5-all.

Dandan played aggressively two win the next two games, firing his second ace to win the match in almost two hours.

"My serve wasn't too good today," said Dandan, who had seven double-faults against Studeny's four. "But I tried to be more consistent with my game because I had the tendency to relax when I'm leading."

Third seed Russian Nadeja Guskova, a 14-year-old native of Moscow, stunned top seed compatriot Elizaveta Titova, 7-6 (9), 0-6, 6-2, to pocket her second girls' singles this year after winning the Sochi Cup back home last September.

Guskova and Titova defeated Filipina Jessica Agra and Japanese Yuko Adachi, 4-6, 7-6, 6-3, to win the girls' doubles title while Japanese Toshiya Suzuki and Australian Matheson Klein pulled off a 4-6, 7-6 (2), 6-4 upset win over second seeds Hiroyasu Ehara and Yuki Matsuo to claim the boys' doubles title.

Meanwhile, the qualifying round for the second leg begins today at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center hardcourts.

plus METRO
Editor **Ester G. Dipasupil**
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Matatag na haligi ng inyong kinabukasan

Facility treats Alzheimer's patients with TLC

By Estrelita C. Valderama
Contributor

LOCATED IN A QUIET NEIGHBORHOOD IN Quezon City is a nursing home for older persons with Alzheimer's disease.

A couple, both doctors, put up the Noli Center for Alzheimer's and Elderly Care in 2004 after undergoing extensive training in the United States on caring for someone suffering from the ailment.

The first of its kind in the Philippines, the center provides 24-hour care to its residents. It has US-standard facilities offering personalized special care, including assistance in going to bed, eating, bathing, taking one's medicine, oral hygiene and grooming.

Alzheimer's is a progressive, degenerative disease which attacks the brain, resulting in impaired memory, thinking and behavior. It was named after physician Alois Alzheimer who first described the disorder in 1906.

Often mistaken as part of the normal aging process, or at worst, insanity, Alzheimer's is neither as simple as *pag-uulianin* or *pagkamakalimutin* (forgetfulness) or what many consider as second childhood.

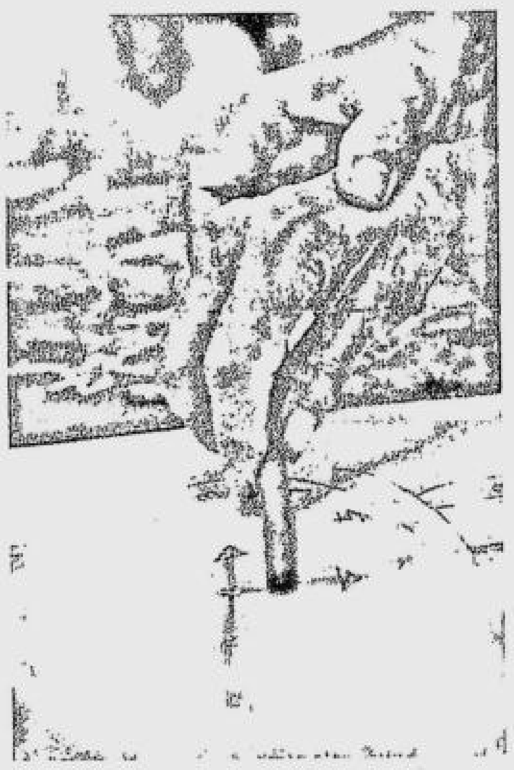
Noli Center was named after the mother of Dr. Rosa Gandahari A. Carpio, an anesthesiologist and associate professor at the Department of Anesthesiology of the University of Santo Tomas. She is married to Ramon, a gastroenterologist, who wanted to help his wife care for her mother.

Pastel bungalow

The center is located on Maginoo Street, Barangay Pinyahan, near the V. Luna Hospital in Quezon City, It is a bungalow-style house painted in pastel colors.

Inside, everything is peaceful and quiet. Each resident has a private room, with professional caregivers to look after them. The house has doorways with lever handles for easy opening, emergency switches in each room and bathroom, skid-free floors, disabled-friendly ramps and handle bars in key areas.

The cost of confinement is comparable to that charged by Home for the Aged, and even lower than that in rehabilitation centers, according Dr. Carpio.



A CAREGIVER helps a resident complete a drawing. Handicraft-making and art lessons are among the structured therapeutic activities for those who stay at the center.

The couple was encouraged to put up the facility after returning from their US training. Initially, Dr. Carpio said, their only intention was to understand the disease and learn how to care for her mother. She added that she and Ramon had tried but failed to find a place where they could leave her during the day when they had to go to work. Their experience, in turn, inspired them to help other families who may be finding it difficult to care for an Alzheimer's patient.

Individualized care plan

The center has an individualized plan of care which allows residents to live at their own pace by focusing on their strengths, enhancing their positive self-image and helping make each day a meaningful experience.

Caregivers also have structured daily social and therapeutic activities for the residents to learn, grow and feel connected to others with similar needs.

After bathing in the morning, they dress up like they are going to work, complete with makeup. Later in the day, they have handicraft lessons to make them feel functional. For spiritual nurturing, they have daily group prayer time and fellowship.

Dr. Carpio's mother, Noli, who is 81, used to be the curator of the National Museum and a part-time professor at the University of the East. She was 73 years old and retired when diagnosed to have moderate Alzheimer's disease.

Prior to that, she showed signs and symptoms like forgetting where she had placed her keys, being unable to complete a sentence, or spanking her grandchildren without reason.

Later on, Noli started to forget how to do the things she did every day. She could not remember the ingredients for *kare-kare*, one of her specialties. At times, she would cook something and then forget what she was doing or worse, fail to turn off the stove. She also could not recognize her her own house even if she was standing in front of it.

Memory loss

Alzheimer's is a disease that makes it hard for people to remember, think and use language. It can make them act strange or moody. After a while, they begin to find it difficult doing simple things like using the phone or handling money.

Memory impairment is a necessary feature for diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. The most common symptom is confusion. The older one gets, the greater the risk of developing the ailment but the probability is higher for women and for people with lower education.

Alzheimer's disease may become manifest at age 40, but it normally afflicts people 65 years old and older. Having a relative with Alzheimer's also increases a person's risk of acquiring the disease.

While researchers now have a deeper understanding of the brain and behavioral changes characterizing the disease, Alzheimer's remains shrouded in mystery. Its cause is still unknown although a lot of theories have been advanced such as reduced level of certain brain chemicals. Because of structural and chemical disorders in the brain, Alzheimer's disease seems to disconnect areas of the brain that normally work together.

The disease is already in the advanced stage when a person who is usually neat would put her muddy shoes in the clothes cabinet. When the phone rings, she would grab something else like a pen and talk to it. At times, she would forget how to use use familiar objects like a spoon and fork. She also becomes paranoid, thinking that other people are stealing her money. There is a really radical change in the character of the person, Dr. Carpio said.

"A person with Alzheimer's disease requires a different kind of caring compared to geriatric patients. They need 24-hour care," she added.

Her husband, Ramon, said that he was the one who had to explain to their children that it was now time for them to look after their *lola*, especially since she had looked after them when they were younger.

"We owe everything we have now to our parents," he told his children.

More understanding

At first, the couple's younger children felt that their mother did not love them as much as she used to because all her attention was now focused on their grandmother. But as time went by, they began to understand their *lola*'s condition.

Now, although Lola Noli spends most of her time in the center, her grandchildren get to enjoy her company when she visits them on weekends.

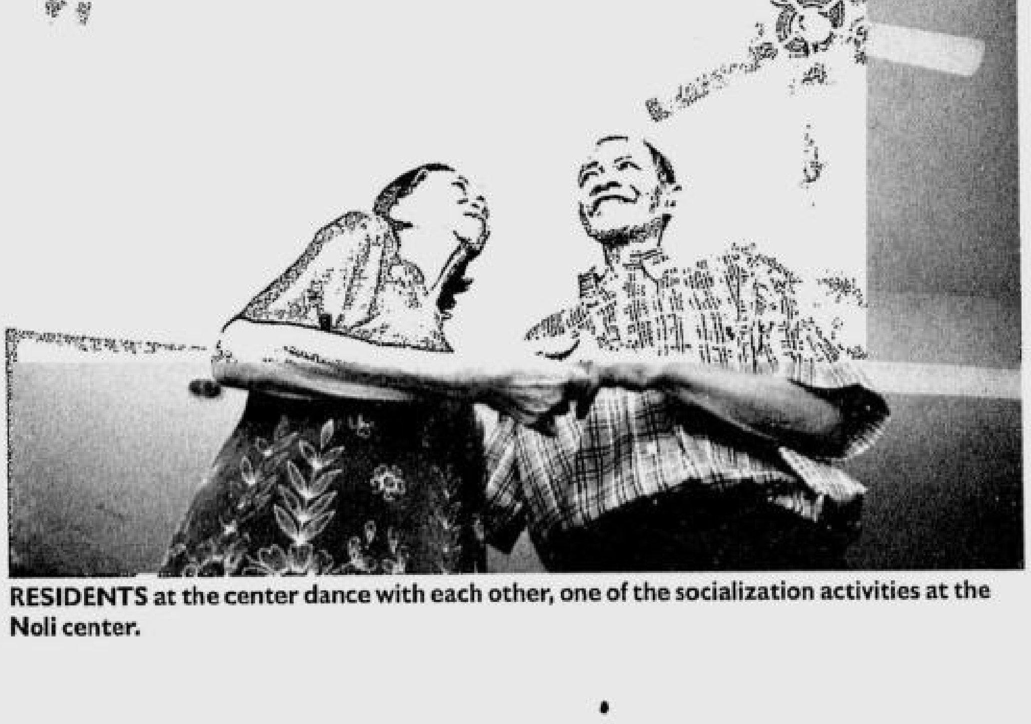
Physical exercise, good nutrition and social activities are important in preventing Alzheimer's or any other ailment.

Being progressive and degenerative, there is no cure for Alzheimer's. Treatment is intended to delay the progression of the disease, manage behavior problems, confusion, and agitation, modify the home environment, and support family members and caregivers.

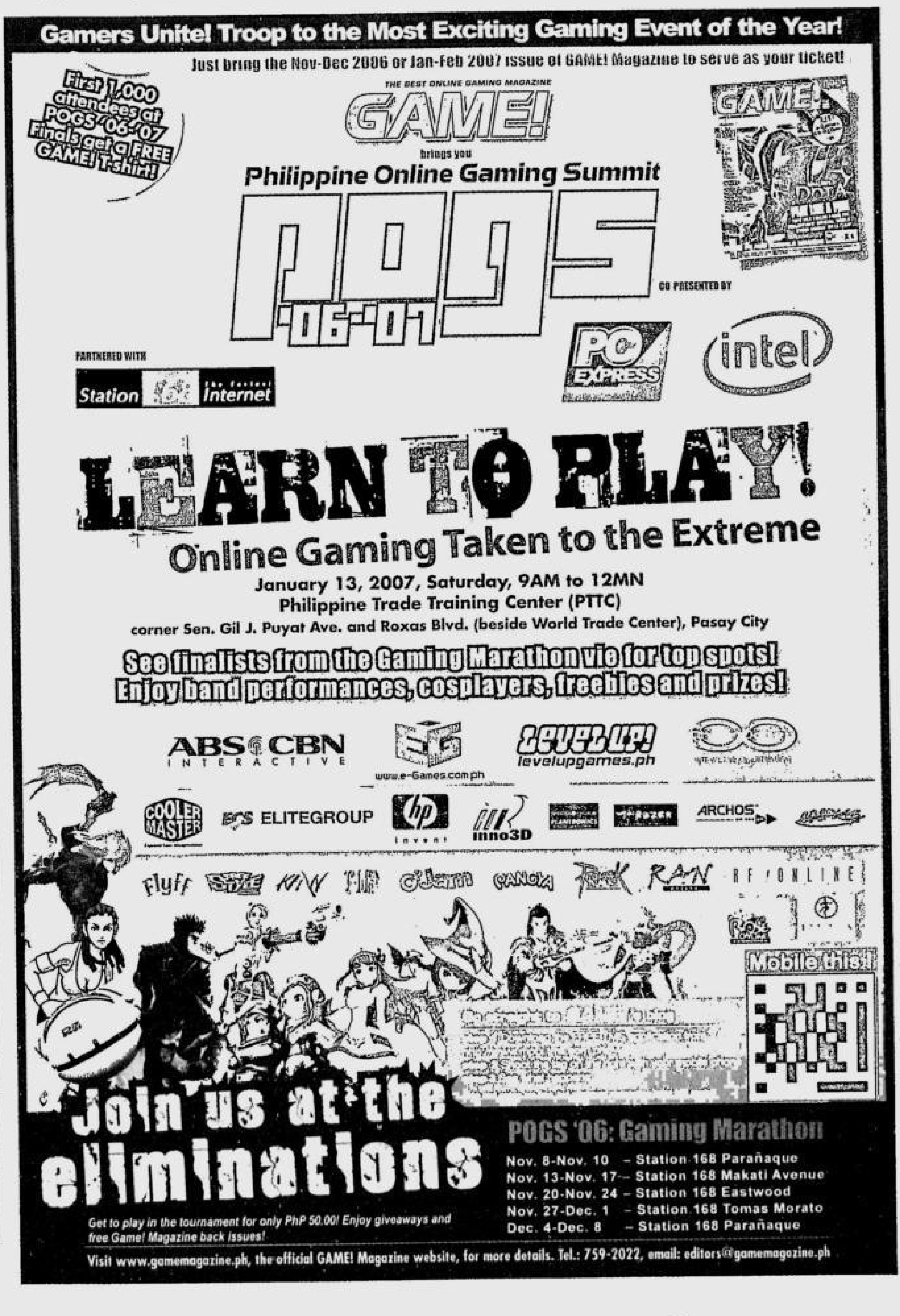
For persons diagnosed with the disorder, a calm, structured environment like the Noli Center, where treatment includes large servings of TLC or tender loving care, may help them continue functioning at some point.

DR. ROSA Carpio (right) put up the center with her husband, Dr. Ramon Carpio, after her mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease several years ago.

PHOTOS BY RAFFY LERMA



RESIDENTS at the center dance with each other, one of the socialization activities at the Noli center.



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Spanish angel of Pasig street children

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

TALES OF THE CITY

MARUXA PITA: Spanish by birth, Filipino at heart.

PHOTOS BY ROGER CARPIO

HER LOOKS READILY SUGGEST she is of Spanish ancestry.

But what she does and how she feels show she is a Filipino at heart.

For almost half a century, 76-year-old Maruxa Pita has been trying to change the lives of poor children in the metropolis.

Starting by giving small things to street children, like clothes or snacks, she has moved on to more ambitious projects.

Pita has started a school offering free elementary and high school education to poor children in Pasig City. Families benefited by her work are both amazed and grateful that a foreigner is finding the strength in her old age to help them improve their lives.

With more than a hundred students to support, she endlessly looks for donations around the world. But the school and her life readily bring a smile.

Very happy

"I am very happy," she says, looking at what her faith and pure heart had not only dreamed but also achieved.

Starting as a weekly feeding program at the Edsa Shrine, her 10-year-old Makabata School Foundation now has its own campus inside a subdivision in Pasig City.

Makabata students do not pay tuition and get personalized teaching and complete facilities. They also get free lunch and snacks, books and bags, shoes and uniforms. If they are not fetched by the school bus or van, they get a transportation allowance.

Pita was born in Madrid in 1930. She became a teacher and a member of the Teresian Association.

In 1959, she was invited to teach mathematics at the Poveda Learning Center in Quezon City. She was only 29 when she arrived here, leaving her siblings and parents in Spain.

She said she was in search of adventure. "That time, I felt it was really nice to learn other things and be exposed to another culture," she said.

What she found during her first few days led to a more meaningful purpose.

Driving around, she saw children selling candies and flowers on the street, some begging for money, knocking on windows of passing cars, risking their lives just to survive.

"These children cannot have the life of a child as I understand it—play, enjoy, go to school. It really affected me," she said.

Soon she was giving clothes and food to the children, especially those she would see at Sto. Domingo Church.

Big decision

The face of poverty made her decide to stay and make the Philippines her home.

"I thought I have something to do here," she said.

After her retirement from the Cultural Center of the Spanish Embassy in Manila City in 1995, she started to work on even greater dreams for street children.

She joined the Bread of Life Ministry of the Edsa Shrine, organizing weekly feeding programs, as well as catechism and academic tutorials for street children frequenting the compound.

The ministry later decided to send the children to public elementary schools though the tutorials continued in the afternoon in a room at the Poveda Learning Center, now the San Pedro Poveda College.

But it was hard for the ministry to check if the children really went to school every day so Pita proposed that the ministry put up its own school.

Armed with their vision and provided a spare room in Poveda, the ministry offered free kindergarten classes to at least 12 street children in 1996. Makabata was born.

More classes

The following year, the foundation asked for another classroom to hold grade school classes for the pre-school graduates.

Soon, the foundation had four classrooms. Affluent Poveda students and their parents also started sharing snacks with the poor children.

The first few days surprised Pita, as most of her pupils would "lie down on a table when they see one in the classroom."

The reason touched her heart. "They don't have beds in their homes. They sleep on the floor and sometimes the floor is the earth."

Pita's dream became too big for four classrooms, as the number of her students grew every year. To be recognized by the Department of Education also required the foundation to have its its own campus.

Helpful friends

Pita managed to raise the millions needed to buy and renovate a house and lot in Pasig City with the help of friends here and abroad, and the Agencia Española de Cooperacion International.

Makabata also boasts a basketball court.

Pita bought an adjacent apartment in 2003 for the high school department, connecting it to the three-story house.

She said the school was proof of the goodness remaining in the hearts of many people.

The school has a computer room, a medical clinic with a steady supply of vitamins and medicines, a library with a wide selection of books and a piano, a science laboratory where teachers had temporarily stored boxes of shampoo for the children, and even a small auditorium with a wide screen for power point presentations—thanks to Poveda alumni, Pita's friends at the ministry and her former classmates in Madrid, and some government offices.

Makabata has about 15 teachers, all trained by a group from Poveda, who take care of 128 students. Students come from urban poor communities. Teachers go around searching for children from the poorest homes.

Of the original 12 kindergarten students in 1996, five will be the first graduates of the high school in March. One of those prospective graduates, 17-year-old Rachel, says she feels "blessed" to be with Makabata.

Rachel, who remembers tagging along with her brother selling *sampaguita* around the shrine when she was young, proudly wears her blue school uniform as she announces she wants to be an accountant.

Pita is keeping her fingers crossed they will all be able to pursue college, since the foundation is also arranging scholarships for them.

"I hope they will do well, and I know they can do well, so that the others here will have examples," she says.

Her foundation is also changing the lives of the students' families by providing livelihood opportunities for parents.

Living with dignity

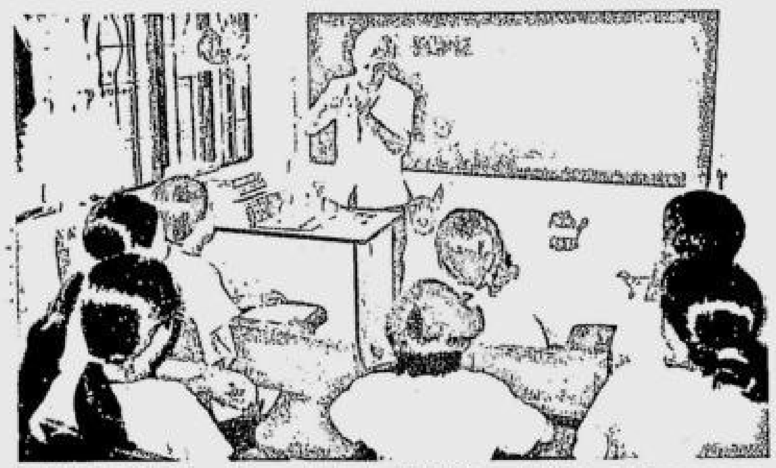
Pita says her mission is not only to help reduce illiteracy. "I would also like to improve their (poor children) way of being, their attitude. I would like them to have some dignity," she added.

So, despite old age, her steps remain firm and fast going up to the third floor of the school, her face filled with pride and happiness as she showed the INQUIRER around her school, around her home.

Being among children she is helping to have a better future is enough to make her feel young.

She is old but she is not tired and she says she will continue working as long as she can.

Those who would like to support the Makabata School Foundation can call 6561289.



MAKABATA School Foundation, which Pita established 10 years ago, has 15 teachers and 128 elementary and high school students.

THE SCHOOL'S students come from urban poor communities. Tuition is free and so are their lunch and snacks, books, bags, shoes and uniforms.

Makati City traffic policemen apprehend 64 'habal-habal' drivers

By Jocelyn R. Uy

TRAFFIC POLICEMEN HAVE apprehended 64 people operating the "habal-habal," a new mode of transportation in Makati City's major and secondary streets, following a crackdown which started last month.

"Habal-habal" refers to privately-owned motorcycles that ferry commuters from McKinley Road to Edsa and other areas in the financial district for a fee, said Senior Insp. Estela Lomat, chief of the Makati Traffic Enforcement Unit.

She added that the motorcycles—which are operating illegally—have became a popular mode of transportation among commuters looking for a fast ride during rush hour amid heavy traffic.

"This mode of transport is extremely dangerous, especially for back-riders or passengers who wear only flimsy helmets," Lomat said.

Those arrested were fined P2,000 each while two motorcycles were impounded after their owners failed to produce the necessary documents for their vehicles.

Lomat also warned them that they would be meted out heavier sanctions should they be apprehended once again.

At the same time, she asked motorists to report to her office any information on "habal-habal" operations by calling up 8999007.

"We fully support Mayor Binay's campaign of promoting road safety in Makati," Lomat said.

Atienza: No more checkpoints

By Tina G. Santos

MANILA MAYOR LITO ATIENZA wants the Manila Police District to remove all checkpoints established on roads and major thoroughfares around the city, saying these have become a source of corruption among law enforcers.

"There's no need for checkpoints; policemen should instead intensify the mobile patrol system," Atienza told reporters.

He said he would instruct MPD acting director Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa to dismantle the checkpoints and apprehend policemen engaged in mulcting activities.

Ideally, checkpoints are meant to preempt crimes as vehicles which pass through these are checked for weapons or persons who act suspiciously. Vehicles with questionable license plates are also stopped to check the plates against a list of stolen or missing vehicles.

However, most of the time, Atienza said, law-abiding citizens and tourists, instead of criminals, end up being victimized by errant policemen manning the checkpoints.

Brazen holdup

"What they're doing is brazen holdup in the streets," he said. "Policemen seem to deteriorate, many of them are turning into highway (robbers)."

"It's distressing to hear complaints about policemen being engaged in extortion activities," he added.

The MPD is headed by Abarzosa who has yet to be appointed permanent chief of the city police force.

Abarzosa, who has been serving as the MPD acting director for four months now, replaced Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, now an assistant director of the National Bureau of Investigation.

"As far as I'm concerned, I'm asking for his (Abarzosa) retention as the officer in charge of the MPD," Atienza said. "I still want to test his leadership. I'm still figuring out his capacity to reform the MPD. There are a lot of police scalawags,"

The mayor cited an incident last week in which an Australian couple was allegedly accosted by Manila policemen on Quirino Avenue.

"The policemen allegedly asked for P10,000 each from the couple," Atienza said. "I want Abarzosa to rid the police force of these kind of men."

Atienza had earlier expressed disappointment over Abarzosa's management because of the continued proliferation of illegal gambling and vending activities in the city.

"To be frank, I'm very much disappointed, there seems to be a total breakdown of order," the mayor had said in an earlier interview.

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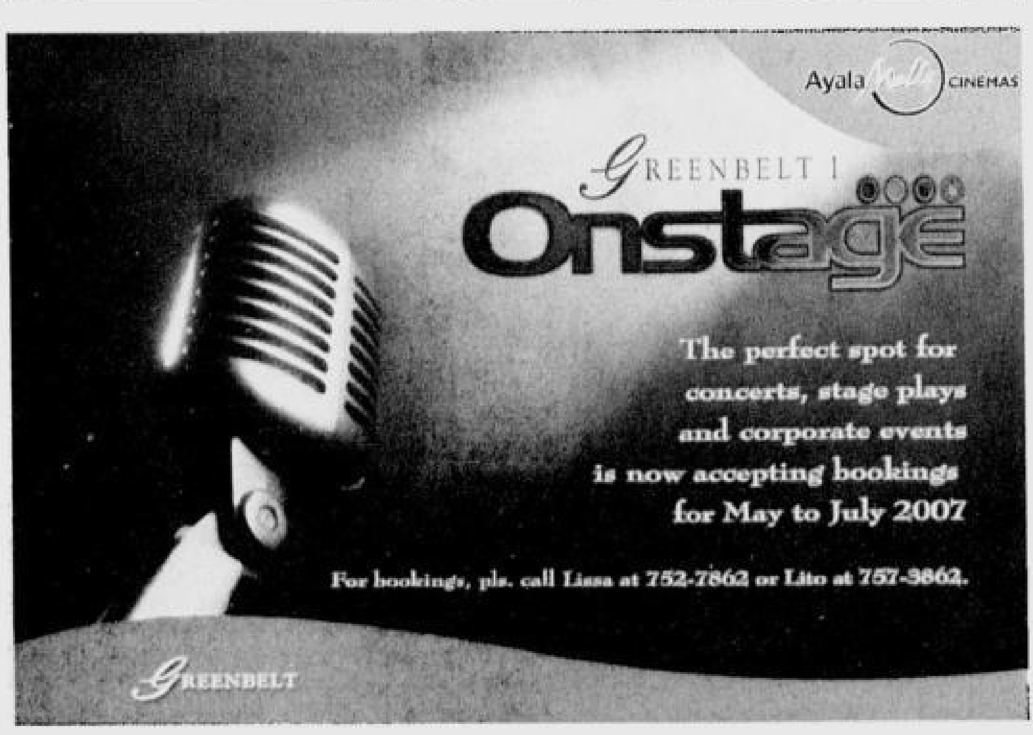

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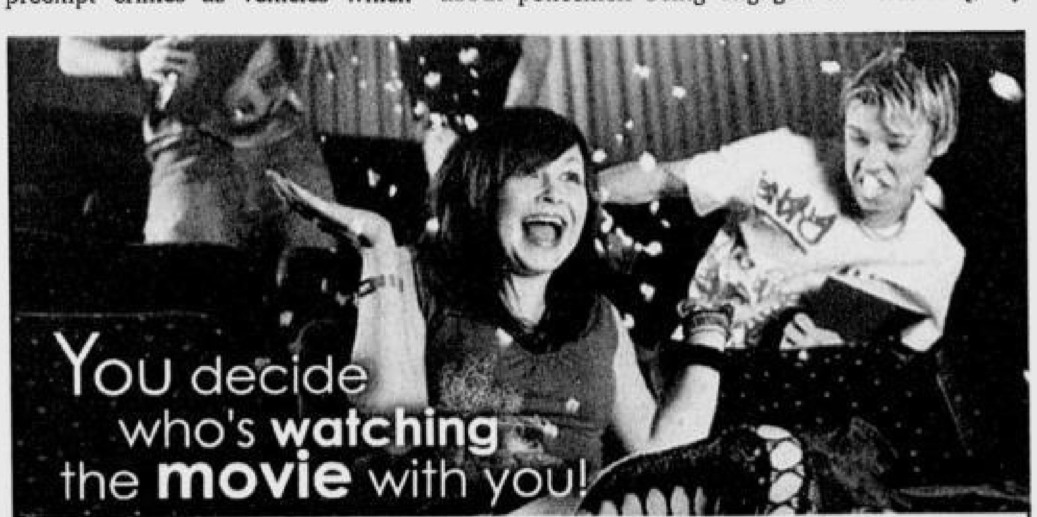

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on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world, and wherever work can be contracted to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

PEREZ: Coming back has never been this sweet.

'KATAS NG TAIWAN'

She makes a fortune out of her bakeshop

By Kenneth M. Del Rosario
Contributor

DARLIZA PEREZ, 26, was once a factory worker in Taiwan. She came home after two years and put up a bakery with her earnings as initial capital in Cebu.

After three years, she is now a poster girl for successful countryside entrepreneurship, her bakeshop has been touted as one of the best-managed enterprises in the Queen City of the South.

Darliza and her parents had always lived a simple life in a far-flung barangay in Ormoc, Leyte. And even then, when money was hard to come by, her father, Antero, who worked as delivery driver in a bakeshop, and mother Maria, who sold the products in the same store, made sure Darliza finished at least high school.

Their nipa house frequently succumbed to heavy rainfall and strong typhoons hitting their province. But Darliza's worst memory with nature's rage was the Ormoc Tragedy in 1991 when torrential rains caused massive flashfloods, destroying lives and properties including their home.

Factory worker

"I was a little girl then and was very scared. It was the hardest period in our lives," Darliza recalls, adding that the tragedy was a defining moment in her life. By then, she was already fiercely determined to help her family rise from poverty and out of the tired nipa house.

After graduating from high school in 1996, Darliza wasted no time and started working as a factory worker in an electronics and semiconductor company in Leyte.

When her six-month contract with the company expired, one of Darliza's cousins who had come home from work in Taiwan, encouraged Darliza to work abroad. Seeing how well her cousin's family's life progressed substantially after just a couple of years of work abroad, Darliza decided she wanted to try her luck overseas, too.

"I had no choice," Darliza tells the INQUIRER in an interview, adding that her parents did not like the idea initially but after a while gave her their blessing, too. "Life in the Philippines was hard and working abroad was the only way I know I can help my family. I wanted to work abroad right away."

Off to Taiwan

In October 1998, Darliza flew to Taiwan to work as a factory worker in a company that produces computers, microphones and PDAs, among others.

She had to assume a fake identity because she was then only 17. She left behind a P40,000-debt from her uncle which she used in payment to the recruiting agency that processed her papers.

"I did not know anything about Taiwan then, except that people there speak Chinese," she says. She just had to take the risk of working overseas in the hope of improving hers and her family's lives, she says.

Her parents later moved to Lilo-an in Cebu.

In Taiwan, homesickness often overwhelmed her. That was the first time she spent a long time without her parents by her side, she says. But every time she felt the urge to just go home, she reminded herself and that she'd be home in no time.

It took her more than a month to fully adjust to Taiwan's culture and climate. Fortunately, she was living with her fellow Filipino workers in a dormitory provided by the company they were working for. There, all the older Pinays played surrogate mothers and sisters to Darliza during their stay.

"Sometimes they're the ones who wake me up and cook my food," she says.

Phone calls and frequent exchange of letters with her parents also helped Darliza overcome longing for her parents when she was still in Taiwan.

While in Taiwan, Darliza saved her money, sending money at home to her parents only once for the town fiesta.

"I decided to keep the money with me because I know my parents have enough to get by at home," she says, adding that every time she counted her money, she realized she had taken another step closer to her dream of having a business of her own in the future.

In 2000, after two years of working in Taiwan, Darliza thought she had enough money to open her own business and wanted desperately to go home.

One time at work, she got sick and was asked to spend the day at their dormitory. Her homesickness got the better of her. Feeling alone, Darliza says she had never missed her parents so much during this time. The incident firmed up Darliza's resolve to just go home even without finishing her contract. And went home she did.

Nicole's Delight

When Darliza went home to the Philippines, she got married and later gave birth to her son, Nicole, in 2001. And though Darliza and her husband separated shortly after Nicole was born, her dream of creating her own business remained intact.

Darliza started putting everything together for her dream business. In September 2003, Darliza, with the help of her parents, formally opened their business—a bakeshop—called Nicole's Delight, which she named after her child.

In the beginning, Darliza bought a piece of land in Lilo-an, a multi-cab for delivery and distribution of products, an oven, and a roller, among others.

"The business was hard to manage at first since we had insufficient funds and equipment," she says. They didn't even have a machine slicer so they had to manually slice their breads.

IN THE COMPANY OF BUSINESS MANDARINS: Perez receives Maunlad award for the Visayas from Marixi Prieto of the INQUIRER and Fernando Zobel de Ayala of Ayala Corporation at the 4th annual Citigroup Microentrepreneur of the Year award rites at the Metropolitan Museum on Roxas Boulevard. RODEL ROTONI

But Darliza and her parents persevered. They started baking cookies starting with just a sack of flour. Their products soon gained popularity because of good tastes. Coupled with the Perez's excellent working relations with their employees and exemplary customer treatment, Darliza's business started to boom beyond her expectations.

Sweet success

At one point, she says her mother even wanted to stop the business because it was growing so fast she thought they wouldn't be able to handle it any longer. With funds loaned from microfinance lending institution, Taytay Sa Kauswagan, Darliza later acquired the necessary equipment and appliances needed for their business.

With her bakeshop's success, Darliza shelved plans to go back to Taiwan or to fly to any other country abroad to work again. She'd rather stay here with her parents and son where she is happy and contented, she says.

After three years, their bakeshop now bakes more than 80 sacks of flour per week and employs more than 30 workers from their neighborhood. Today, Nicole's Delight also delivers to parts of Bohol and Samar and now offers 13 different cookie products, including their best-seller biscuit, Cai-Cai.

Last month, the Citigroup hailed Darliza's bakeshop with the Maunlad Award for its excellent management and for generating employment in their community.

Darliza encourages Filipinos to work abroad but not for a very long period of time. "Once they earn enough money, they should go back here and put up their own businesses, saving money when abroad is very important and is key to anyone's success."

Engineer builds his family, business in Kuwait

By Kenneth M. del Rosario
Contributor

IT HAS BEEN 14 LONG YEARS SINCE Bernardo "Bong" Autida, a systems engineer, first left the country for Kuwait to secure a more financially stable tomorrow for him and his family. Now 37, he lives at present with his wife in the Middle East with their three children.

Putting his degree in Computer Technology to good use, Bong immediately worked as a computer mainframe operator in United Coconut Planters Bank shortly after graduating from the Rizal Technological College in 1990.

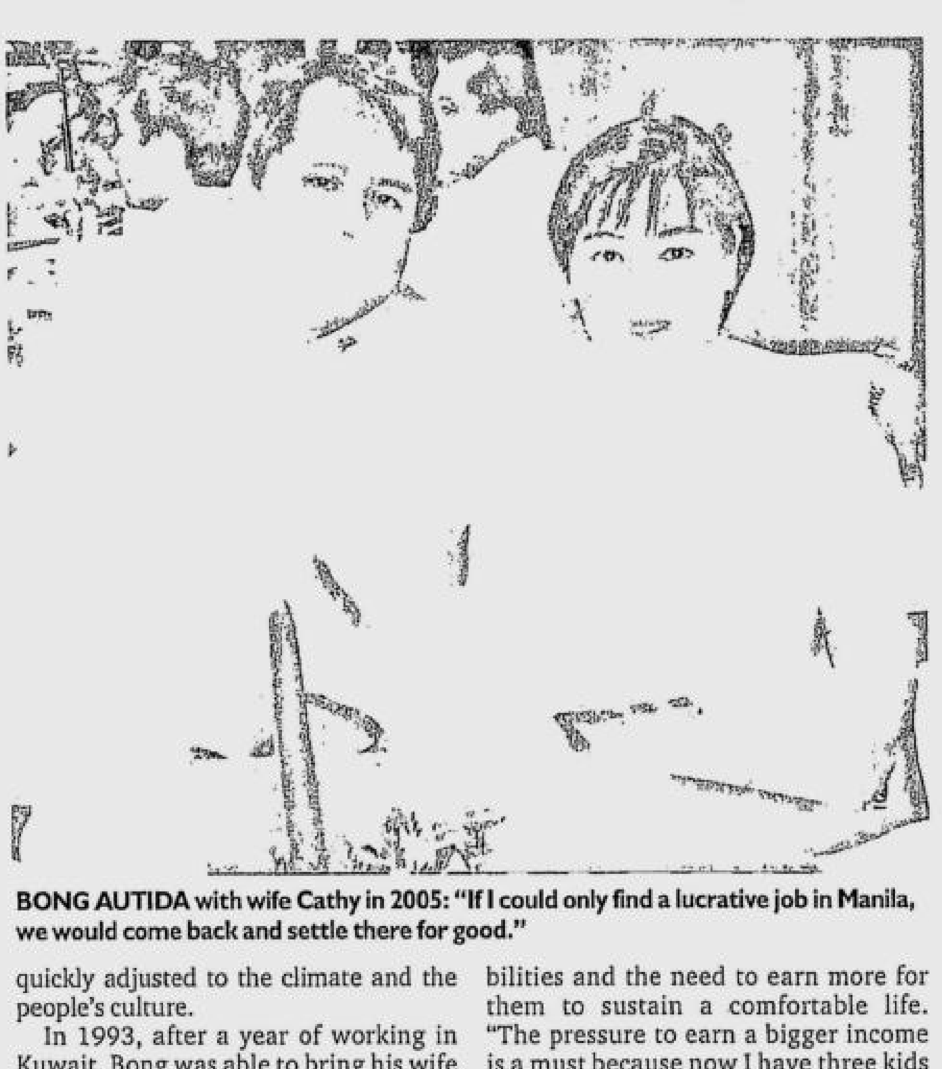
Two years after he started working in the bank, a chance to go and work abroad with the same job came. He decided that perseverance and his two-year work experience in the depository equipped him well to take on any kind of job anywhere in the world. "I was young and I wanted to see what it's like working abroad," Bong tells the INQUIRER in an overseas phone interview.

A good start

Bong, the second of four children who traces his roots to Antipolo, Rizal, grabbed the opportunity to work abroad in National Bank of Kuwait after finding out that he could earn there as much as 10 times more than he was earning in the Philippines. With determination and no fear at all, Bong prepared for his first flight away from the country.

Aware that he could later take his family to live with him in Kuwait as part of his work benefits, Bong married his long-time girlfriend, Cathy, before he left for Kuwait in August 1992. It would take him two years before he would come back to the Philippines for a vacation.

Although Kuwait did not offer the bright lights of Las Vegas, as Bong had envisioned to see, he nevertheless felt at home in the desert-rich country and quickly adjusted to the climate and the people's culture.



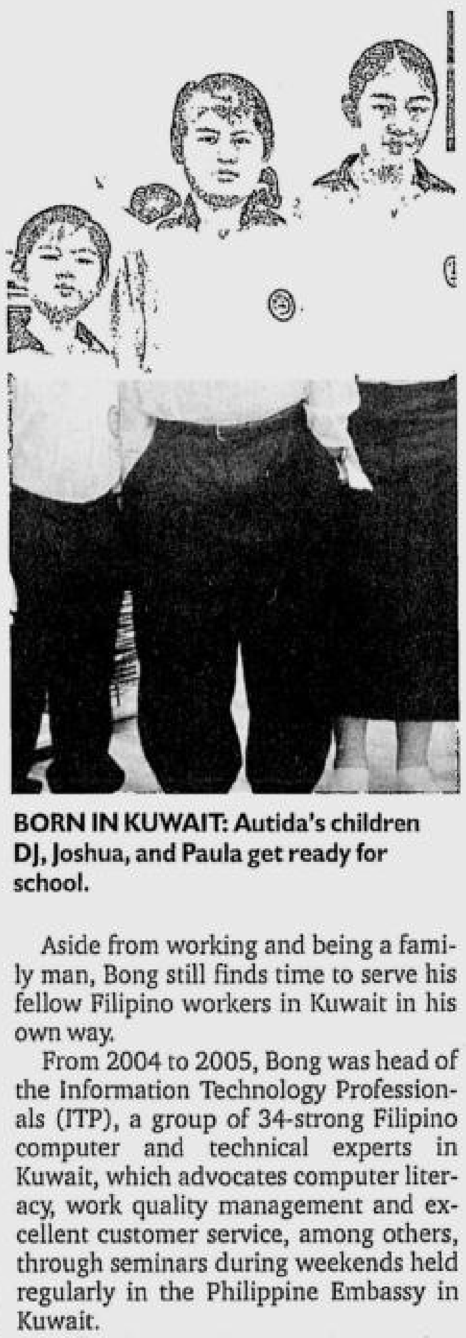
BONG AUTIDA with wife Cathy in 2005: "If I could only find a lucrative job in Manila, we would come back and settle there for good."

In 1993, after a year of working in Kuwait, Bong was able to bring his wife abroad to live with him. Not long after, Cathy was pregnant with their eldest child Paula (now 12 years old). It was then that the couple decided that it would be best for their new family to stay in Kuwait for the meantime as more career opportunities awaited them.

Two years later after Paula was born, the Autidas had their second child, Joshua (now 10 years old), and then their third, DJ (now 6 years old). As Bong's family grew, so did his responsibilities and the need to earn more for them to sustain a comfortable life. "The pressure to earn a bigger income is a must because now I have three kids who all go to school," Bong says reiterating that he preferred sending his kids to a Filipino school so they would never lose the pride and sense of being Pinoy.

Helping hand

With hard work and dedication, Bong successfully worked his way up the corporate ladder of National Bank of Kuwait from a computer operator and comptroller to the highly coveted position of systems engineer today.



BORN IN KUWAIT: Autida's children DJ, Joshua, and Paula get ready for school.

Aside from working and being a family man, Bong still finds time to serve his fellow Filipino workers in Kuwait in his own way.

From 2004 to 2005, Bong was head of the Information Technology Professionals (ITP), a group of 34-strong Filipino computer and technical experts in Kuwait, which advocates computer literacy, work quality management and excellent customer service, among others, through seminars during weekends held regularly in the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait.

Today, he remains an active member of the organization as an adviser.

His latest project is a website called "Kuwait Pinoy" which is "dedicated in helping distressed Filipinos" by providing accurate news and information on important dates and events regarding Pinoys in Kuwait. Though he initiated the creation of the website, he now runs it with the help of ITP members and some Filipino volunteers there.

Today, Bong owns and runs a Kuwait-based web designing company together with Christopher, one of his younger brothers. Also, Bong and his family now owns a house in Marikina where they stay every time they visit the Philippines.

With his extensive work experience abroad, Bong has learned and realized many things in life. "Never stop learning new things and always be open to changes and opportunities," Bong advises Filipinos who wish to become Overseas Filipino Workers.

With his hands full right now with family, work, and community responsibilities, Bong recently entered a partnership with a friend in an advertising and publishing company in Kuwait. "I feel blessed about my success here. Unfortunately, not all OFWs have the same success story to tell," Bong adds, saddened with news stories about unfair treatment of some Filipino workers abroad.

'I'm coming back home'

Bong's family had a great start in Kuwait and he hopes to extend his blessings to his mother country when he finally returns here. "My plan is to come back to the Philippines before I turn 40 and stay there for good," Bong says, adding that he loves the Philippines and can't wait to come home.

He added that if he could only find a job in the Philippines that would generate the same income as that of his work in Kuwait, he would fly home anytime. For the moment, he feels happy and fortunate of where they are today and wants nothing else than to see his children finish school.

Protesters lay siege to Lebanon gov't

BEIRUT, LEBANON—HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS of Lebanese heeded Hezbollah's call, flooding downtown Beirut to pressure the US-supported government to resign. But Prime Minister Fuad Saniora showed no signs of backing down in a confrontation that could tear apart the country.

The protesters raised a deafening noise of chants and revolutionary and nationalist songs just outside the main government offices on Friday. Barbed wire and armored vehicles separated the demonstrators from the buildings where Saniora and some of his ministers were holed up.

"Pack your bags Fuad, and leave us and the country in peace," many shouted.

The loud but peaceful rally, which took on a carnival-like atmosphere in bright autumn sunshine, was far larger than last week's pro-government demonstration that followed the assassination of Industry Minister Pierre Gemayel. Friday's crowd was estimated at between 800,000 and a million people, who formed a sea of red-and-white Lebanese flags with the green cedar emblem.

The protest was the opening volley in the Shiite Muslim group Hezbollah's campaign of open-ended demonstrations. The event could be a watershed for the future of Lebanese politics, torn between anti-Syrian politicians who control the government and pro-Syrian forces led by Hezbollah.

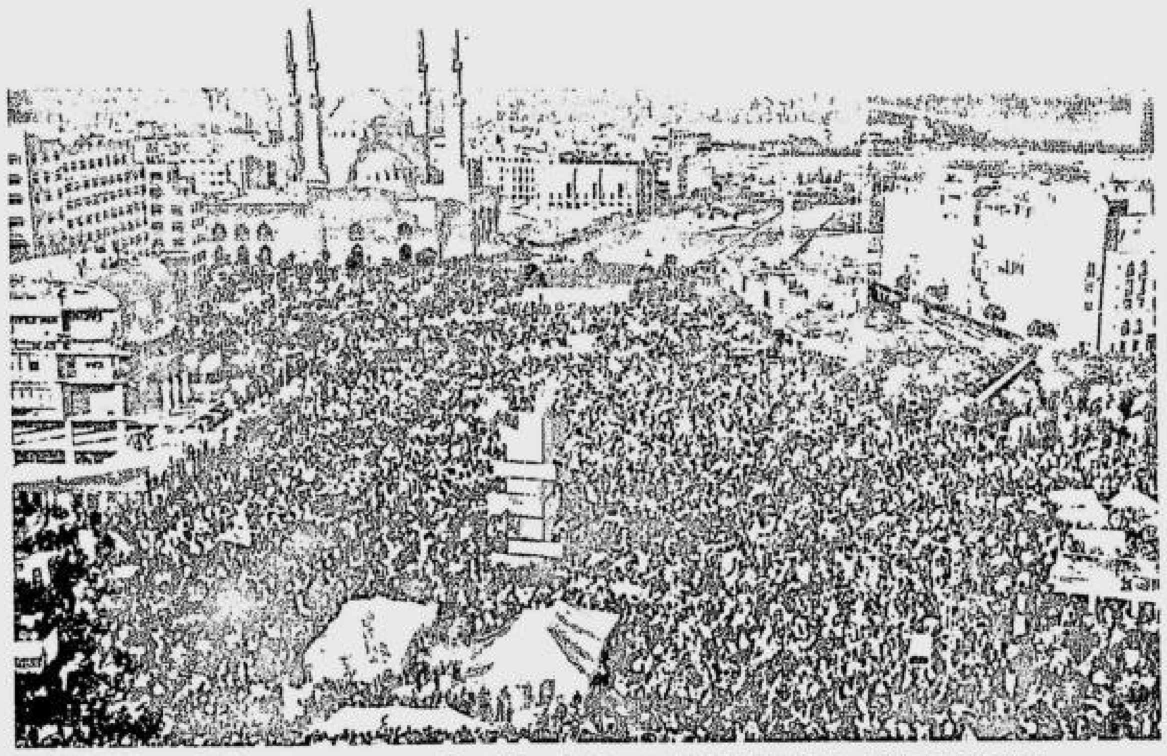
Hezbollah and its allies demand a third of the seats in Saniora's Cabinet—enough to veto its decisions—and have vowed to continue their campaign until the government falls. They cite Lebanon's constitution, which says the Cabinet is supposed to represent all communities in the country.

Saniora and his supporters call the campaign a coup attempt led by neighboring Syria and its ally Iran, a stance echoed by Washington. Hezbollah and its allies contend the real fight is against American influence, saying the United States now dominates Lebanon in the interests of Israel.

Lebanon is one of a number of areas in the Middle East where the United States and Iran are vying for influence.

"We do remain very concerned that Hezbollah and its allies, with support from Syria and the Iranian government, are continuing to work to destabilize Lebanon," State Department deputy spokesperson Tom Casey said. "The demonstrations are aimed at toppling Lebanon's legitimate and democratically elected government."

Most protesters left after the rally ended in the evening but several thousand set up tents for an open-ended sit-in outside Saniora's offices, blaring slogans through loudspeakers. *AP*



LEBANESE pro-Syrian groups wave national flags during a rally in Beirut Dec. 1. The protesters demanded the resignation of Lebanon's Western-backed government at a Hezbollah-led rally, but Prime Minister Fouad Siniora appeared unmoved by the pressure. REUTERS

WORLDBRIEFS

Pope hailed for praying towards Mecca

ISTANBUL—Pope Benedict ended a sensitive, fence-mending visit to Turkey on Friday amid praise for visiting Istanbul's famed Blue Mosque and praying there facing towards Mecca "like Muslims." The Pope, who sparked protests across the Muslim world with a speech two months ago seen as criticizing Islam, looked relaxed and pleased as he entered the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit for a mass at the end of the four-day trip. His first visit to a mostly Muslim country, held under tight security for fear of protests by nationalists and Islamists, was highlighted by a series of conciliatory gestures culminating in a stop on Thursday afternoon in Istanbul's famed Blue Mosque. Istanbul Grand Mufti Mustafa Cagrici, who prayed with him there, said Benedict had faced Mecca and stood like Muslims do when they pray aright. "These were very nice gestures," he told NTV television. "The Pope's dreaded visit was concluded with a wonderful surprise," wrote daily Aksam on its front page. *Reuters*

Germany moves to sharply restrict public smoking

FRANKFURT, GERMANY—Yielding grudgingly to the growing European campaign against smoking in public places, Germany announced Friday that it would seek to ban smoking in restaurants, discos, schools and other public buildings, but not in pubs, bars or beer tents. The compromise, worked out by the coalition government, would bring this country, Europe's biggest tobacco market, closer to its neighbors in curtailing public smoking. But it would fall short of recent laws passed by Britain and France, which stamp out cigarettes in pubs and bars as well as other public places. Antismoking groups said the proposal was a milestone, given Germany's long resistance to any restrictions. They called on the parliament to broaden the ban when it votes on it, probably next year. German officials defended the loopholes, saying the ban had a better chance of passing that way. Germany's resistance has put it out of step with its European neighbors. This year, Spain, Portugal, France, Scotland and England have proposed or passed bans on smoking in public places. On Friday, Britain announced that its ban would take effect on July 1, 2007. *NYT*

Malaysia's 'Snake King' dies after cobra bite

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia's "Snake King" Ali Khan Samsuddin, who broke records by living with thousands of scorpions and hundreds of snakes, has died after a cobra bit him, reports said Saturday. Ali Khan, 48, who wrangled with snakes for over 25 years, was bitten on his left hand by the six meter-long King Cobra during a snake show in the capital on Tuesday, and died on Friday. "He had been bitten by snakes many times before, including three times by King Cobras … so we didn't think anything would happen," his son, Amjad Khan, 21, was quoted as saying in the Star daily. The snake charmer had been given outpatient treatment at a Kuala Lumpur hospital and had told his family not to worry before taking a turn for the worse. *AFP*

UK finds two more polonium cases in spy probe

LONDON—BRITISH SCIENTISTS PROBING the death of Alexander Litvinenko said on Friday that two more people had been contaminated with the same radioactive poison that killed the former Russian spy.

The growing number of cases raised fears of wider contamination in Britain, where Litvinenko's accusation that he was poisoned by Moscow has already strained relations with Russia.

Mario Scaramella, an Italian contact of Litvinenko, was admitted to hospital in London after polonium 210 was detected in his body, but a medical spokesperson said he was "currently well and shows no symptoms of radiation poisoning."

Officials said an adult female relative of Litvinenko had shown traces in her urine of polonium 210, the same isotope that poisoned the former agent and outspoken Kremlin critic.

But they said she was not in short-term danger and any long-term risk was likely to be very small.

"It is a fraction of the lethal dose that Mr. Litvinenko himself had," Home Secretary John Reid said.

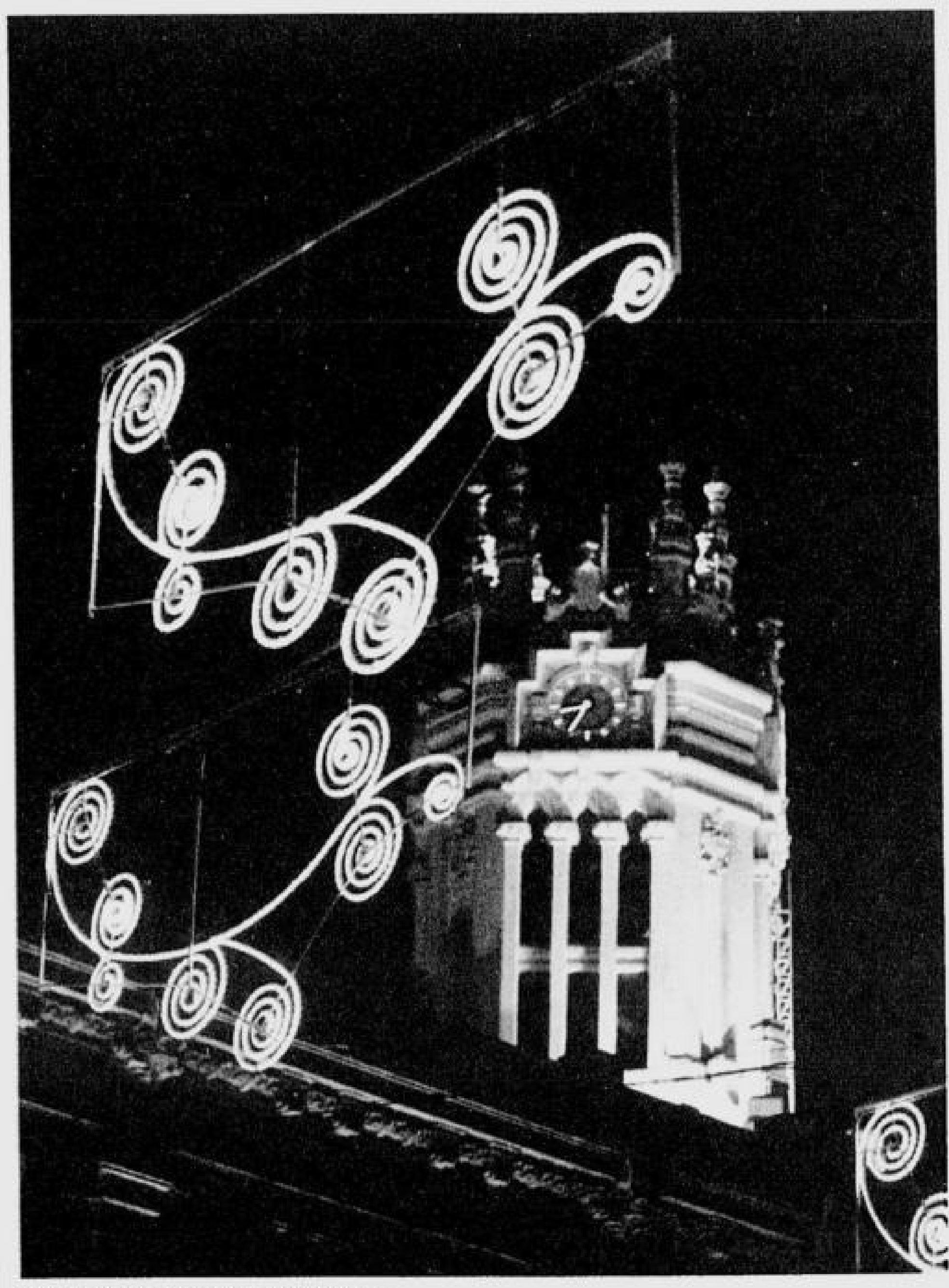
The British government has struggled to allay public health concerns over radiation and police remain silent about their investigation into Litvinenko's slow and agonizing death.

The case has sparked a variety of theories, many centering on the possible involvement of rogue Russian agents.

Scaramella met Litvinenko at a London sushi restaurant on Nov. 1, the same day the Russian fell ill.

Litvinenko, who also met two Russians in a London hotel on the same day, believed President Vladimir Putin had ordered him killed. Russia has dismissed the charge as ridiculous, but the case has created diplomatic tension between London and Moscow.

Authorities say polonium is not dangerous unless swallowed, inhaled. or absorbed through a wound. *Reuters*



IT'S HERE, READY OR NOT

Christmas lights illuminate a central street, three weeks ahead of Christmas Eve, in Madrid. REUTERS

Amid catcalls, Mexico president is sworn in

MEXICO CITY—IT WAS NOT pretty, but Felipe Calderon, the new president of Mexico, managed to take the oath of office in Congress on Friday, as opposition lawmakers whistled and catcalled and the losing leftist candidate staged a mass march down the central avenue of the capital.

Never before in modern Mexican history has a president been sworn in under such chaotic and divisive conditions. At midnight, as President Vicente Fox's term expired, the government took the unprecedented step of broadcasting the private swearing-in of Calderon at the presidential residence, a legal necessity usually not publicized.

Minutes later, Calderon spoke on national television to urge lawmakers to "respect the constitution" and let the ceremony take place.

The call went unheeded. Calderon's opponents from the leftist Democratic Revolution Party tried to block the entrances to the Congress to prevent him from being sworn in. But with his conservative National Action Party supporters ringing the podium, he and Fox were spirited in by bodyguards through a door near the dais at the front of the chamber at 9:50 a.m.

Calderon quickly took the oath of office and Fox handed over the traditional presidential banner, then both left the chamber. The entire ceremony lasted four minutes. *NYT*

Too much weight can result in too little money

AS YOU SNATCH A COUPLE MORE Christmas cookies or down another eggnog, you might be thinking about what those extra calories will do to your health.

But have you considered what they will do to your wealth? The sugar and fat will add pounds, which can lead to heart disease, diabetes and a shortened life span.

There is another consequence to packing on extra weight: Being fat costs money—tens of thousands of dollars over a lifetime.

Heavy people do not spend more than normal-size people on food itself, but their life insurance premiums are two to four times as large. They can expect higher medical expenses, and they tend to make less money and accumulate less wealth in their shortened lifetimes. They can have a harder time being hired and, if hired, a harder time winning plum assignments and promotions.

Doctor visits and prescriptions for medicines to manage diabetes, cholesterol, back pain and depression can reach $7,000 in annual out-of-pocket expenses for someone -- admittedly one with nearly every problem associated with obesity -- covered by an employer's health insurance, according to an estimator that United HealthGroup provides to its customers. *NYT*

World AIDS Day: Debates over abstinence, condoms

JOHANNESBURG—TWO CONTROVERSIES flared on World AIDS Day as the United States and South Africa backed sexual abstinence to avoid infection and British leader Tony Blair castigated religious bans on condoms.

US President George W. Bush joined other world leaders in renewing vows to combat the disease, which has claimed more than 25 million lives in 25 years and for which a cure and vaccine remain dismayingly elusive.

"The pandemic of HIV/AIDS can be defeated, and the United States is willing to take the lead in that fight," he said.

Bush spelled out Washington's role funding AIDS drugs in poor countries, but also emphasized promoting abstinence.

That tactic is derided by many AIDS activists as moralizing and unworkable, even potentially dangerous. These campaigners plead instead for sex education and availability of condoms.

Fighting AIDS "includes the ABC approach, encouraging abstinence, being faithful and using condoms, with abstinence as the only sure way to avoid the sexual transmission of HIV/AIDS," said Bush.

South Africa used World AIDS Day to announce a new national AIDS plan: to halve by 2011 the rate of new HIV infections, notably by encouraging teenagers aged 14-17 to "delay the initiation of sex." "The future course of the epidemic hinges in many respects on the behavior young people adopt and maintain," according to the plan, launched by Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

South Africa is second only to India in the number of HIV infections. In a country of 47 million, 5.5 million South Africans live with AIDS or the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that causes it.

In Britain, Prime Minister Tony Blair hit out at religious bans on condoms, saying "if all the churches and religious organizations were facing up to reality, it would be better."

"The danger is, if we have a sort of blanket ban coming from religious hierarchy saying it's wrong to do it, then you discourage people from doing it in circumstances where they need to protect their own lives," he said.

Blair made the remarks as the Vatican is considering a 100-page report on condoms that has been requested by Pope Benedict XVI.

Since AIDS was first discovered 25 years ago in a small group of US gay men, it has killed at least 25 million people and nearly 40 million people today have HIV/AIDS, according to the UN agency UNAids.

Despite billions of dollars poured into research, there is neither a cure nor a vaccine.

The distribution of drugs that curb HIV, transforming a killer disease into a manageable one, is only now reaching a higher gear in Africa, where nearly two-thirds of infected people live.

The theme of this year's World's AIDS Day is accountability.

"Accountability … requires every president and prime minister, every parliamentarian and politician, to decide and declare that 'AIDS stops with me,'" said UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. *AFP*

ALINE Hubin stands in front of red balloons with a red ribbon painted on her face on World Aids Day in Edinburgh, Dec. 1. REUTERS

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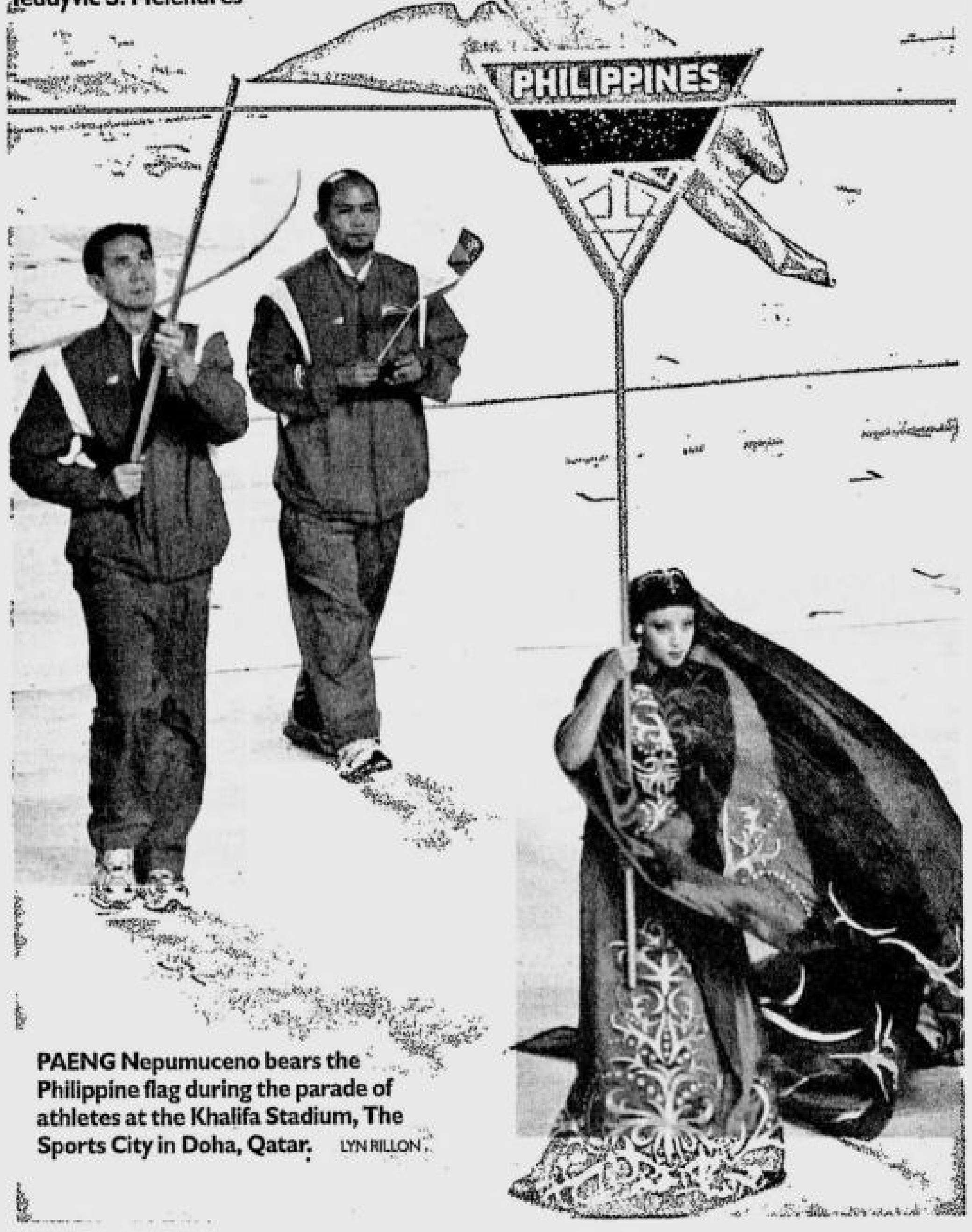

PAENG Nepumuceno bears the Philippine flag during the parade of athletes at the Khalifa Stadium, The Sports City in Doha, Qatar. LYN RILLON

Crack bowlers aim to topple Asiad kingpins

By Ted S. Melendres, *Sports Editor*

DOHA, QATAR—THE PHILIPPINES LAYS ON the table what could be the first aces of its campaign in the 15th Asian Games when the highly regarded tenpin bowlers open their bid in the men's and women's singles at the Qatar Bowling Center here.

The country's full complement of six men and six women compete for medals over six games against some of the world's finest, including reigning World Cup champion Salem Bu Sharbak of host Qatar, starting at 9 a.m.

"This is going to be like the sprints," said Paeng Nepomuceno, the four-time World Cup winner, on the eve of the battles. "Luck will be a big factor here after [the organizers] reduced the number of games from 12 to six. *May tsamba lahat* [Anyone can win with luck]."

A medal in the women's event could come from among Liza del Rosario, Cecilia Yap, Jojo Canare, Liza Clutario, Irene Garcia-Benitez and Maryann Posadas, according to RP coach Bong Coo, who does not hide her admiration for her multititled wards.

Coo, herself, a former world champion, points to the Malaysians and the women from Middle Eastern countries as the players to beat, though.

"*Sila ang mga paborito ngayon* (They are the favorites)," she said.

Reigning singles world champion Biboy Rivera, former World Cup winner CJ Suarez, Asian Games Masters kingpin Markwin Tee, Chester King and Tyrone Ongpauco join Nepomuceno in the expectedly tough singles competition.

The swimmers also plunge into action again with five men vying in the heats of the 100-meter butterfly, 200m freestyle and 50m breaststroke from 10 a.m. at the Hamad Aquatic Center, part of Doha's sprawling Sport City complex which is also holding the diving events.

Should Fil-American James Walsh and Ernest Dee in the 100m fly, Miguel Molina and Kendrick Uy in the 200m free and Molina again and Gerard Bordado in the 50m breast get past the heats, they will contend for medals in the finals which get under way at 6 p.m.

Seven-time Southeast Asian Games gold medalist John Baylon begins what he said could be his final Asiad stint when he clashes with Pakistan's Saeed Akhtar in the -81 kilogram preliminary at 10 a.m. at the Qatar Sports Club.

CRACK/ A22

RP Daily Schedule—Dec. 3

Baseball ***(Al-Rayyan Stadium)***—9 a.m.—Korea vs RP

Beach Volleyball ***(Sport City)***—Schedule depends on Dec. 2 results

Bowling ***(Qatar Bowling Center)***—Women's singles 9 a.m. (Liza del Rosario, Cecilia Yap, Josephine Canare, Liza Clutario, Irene Garcia-Benitez, Maryann Posadas); Men's singles 5 p.m. (Paeng Nepomuceno, Biboy Rivera, Christian Jan Suarez, Chester King, Markwin Tee, Tyrone Ongpauco)

Boxing ***(Aspire)***—Draw not available at presstime

Chess ***(Al-Dana Club)*** —Starting at 11 a.m.—Men's rapid event (Darwin Laylo, Ronald Dableo); Women's rapid event (Jedara Docena)

Cycling Road ***(Cycling Street Circuit)***—Starting at 11 a.m.—Warren Davadilla, Ericson Obosa

Judo ***(Qatar Sports Club)***— -81kg: John Baylon (RP) vs Saeed Akhtar (Pakistan)

Rowing ***(West Bay Lagoon)***—Men's Double Sculls 10 a.m. (Benjie Tolentino, Jose Rodriguez)

Soft Tennis ***(Khalifa Int'l Complex)***—Starting at 9 a.m.—Men's team event (Wenifredo de Leon Jr., Michael John Enriquez, Samuel Noguit, Orlando Silvoza II); Women's team event (Petrona Bantay, Belen Dante, Divina Gracia Escala)

Swimming ***(Hamad Aquatic Center)***—Heats (10 a.m.) and finals (6 p.m.)—Men's 100m butterfly (James Walsh, Ernest Dee); Men's 200m freestyle (Miguel Molina, Kendrick Uy); Men's 50m breastroke (Miguel Molina, Gerard Bordado)

Asian Games Medalists
Day 1 of Competition

Shooting—***Men 10-meter Air Rifle Team***—**Gold**—China (Li Jie, Liu Tianyou, Zhu Qinan); **Silver**—South Korea (Chae Kean-bae, Kim Hye-sung, Yu Jae-chul); **Bronze** —India (Faratade Navanath Bhanud, Narang Gagan, Padinchare Thermad Raghunath); ***Women Trap***—**Gold** —Chen Li, China; **Silver**— Zhu Mei, China; **Bronze**—Lin Yi-chun, Taiwan Trap Team; **Gold**—China (Chen Li, Wanl Yujin, Zhu Mei); **Silver**—North Korea (Chae Hye Gyong, Kim Yong Bok, Pak Yong Hui); **Bronze**—South Korea (Lee Bo-na, Lee Jung-a, Lee Myung-ae)

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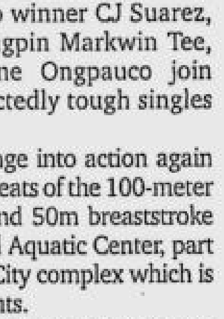

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China shooters claim first gold

DOHA—CHINA'S MARKSMEN CLINCHED the first gold medal of the Asian Games on Saturday with a comprehensive victory in the men's 10m air rifle team event.

Olympic champion Zhu Qinan, reigning games champion Li Jie and Liu Tianyou tallied 1,786 points to finish nine points ahead of South Korea's Yu Jae-chul, Chae Kean-bae and Kim Hye-sung.

The Indian trio of Gagan Narang, P.T. Raghunath and Navanath Fartade lifted the bronze.

The individual final in the men's air rifle is scheduled for later on Saturday. Six gold medals, including those in women's trap and women's air rifle, will be decided on the opening day of the shooting.

China won 27 shooting gold medals at the 2002 Pusan Games, including 15 in team events.

Reuters

Crack bowlers...

From page A21

An hour later, former Marlboro Tour winner Warren Davadilla and Ericson Obosa carry the biggest Philippine hopes in cycling when they vie for medals in the road race at the Cycling Street Circuit.

"The road racers are our best bets for medals and they prepared long and hard for these races," said cycling official Jun Lomibao. "But don't count out the oval boys, they are well-motivated."

The draw in the boxing competitions for today's first-round fights at the Aspire, focal point of Sport City which is said to have the world's largest indoor sports dome, drew mixed reactions from RP coaches.

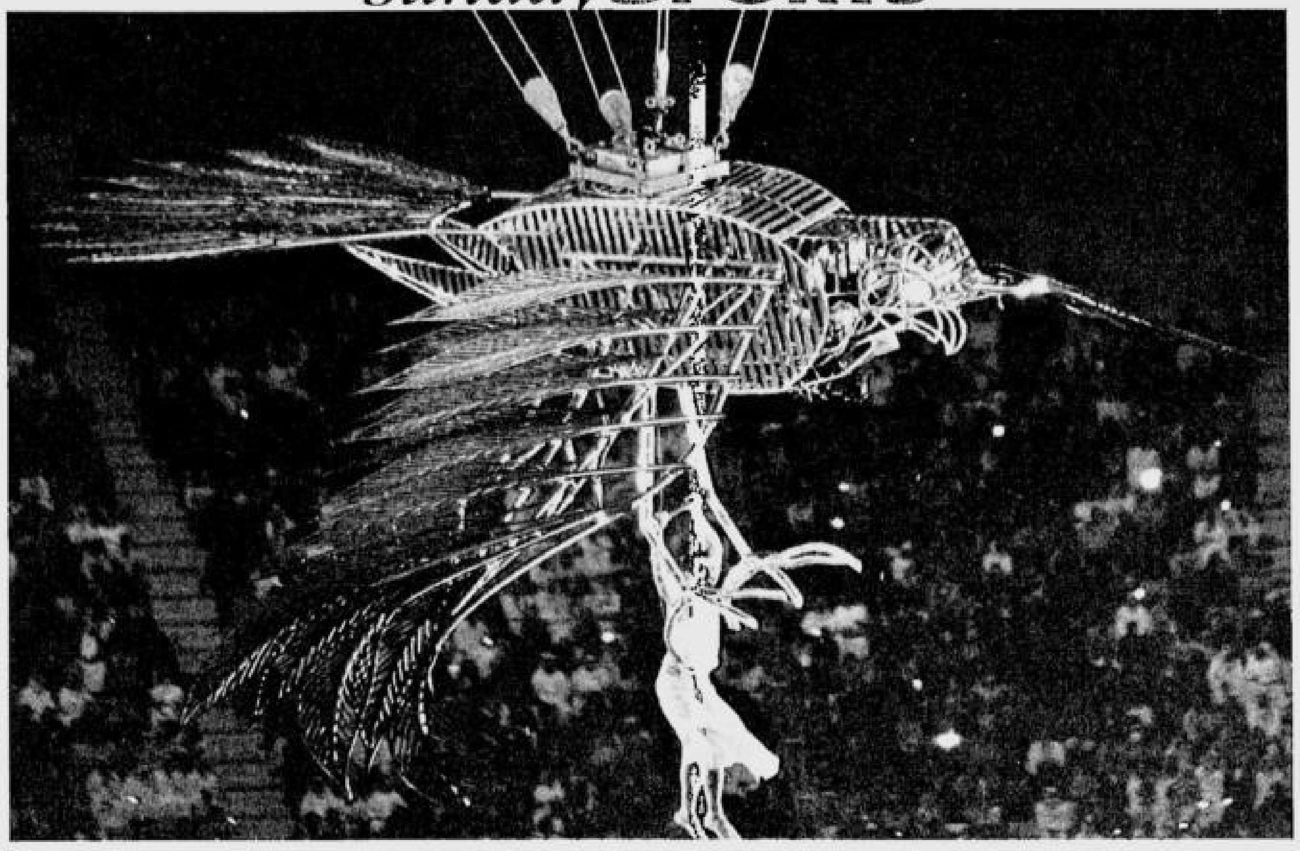
"We have relatively light initial opponents in some classes, but fights in the heavier divisions are all tough," coach Patricio Gaspi said in Filipino. "No matter who the opponents are, I expect the boys to come out fighting from the first bell."

As the bowlers make their first rolls at 9 a.m., the men's and women's soft tennis squads collide against separate teams for berths in the next round at the Khalifa International Tennis and Squash Complex.

Nothing much has been known about the Filipino soft-tennis crews but RP delegation officials said the men's team of Wenifredo de Leon Jr., Michael John Enriquez, Samuel Noguit and Orlando Silvoza II could spring a surprise or two and land in the medal round.

Their backs already against the wall following back-to-back defeats, the RP batters are expected to sink deeper in the hole when they take on Asiad co-favorite South Korea, also at 9 a.m., at the Al-Rayyan Baseball-Softball Stadium in the desert north of the capital.

The embattled Filipinos, woefully lacking in excellent pitchers, were blown out of the ballpark in its first two games, 17-2 and 15-4, by the all-amateur Japanese and the Chinese, respectively.



A SHOW depicts the ancestor of Qataris being rescued by a mythical bird from a creature of the sea. LYN RILLON

Japanese take lead

DOHA—CHINA AND JAPAN WENT head-to-head Saturday in the Asian Games pool with the Japanese taking an early edge in the hunt for six opening day gold medals.

Maki Mita of Japan set the trend in the women's 200m freestyle with the fastest qualifying time of 2:00.44 ahead of Pan Jiaying of China, the Olympic relay silver medalist.

China's defending champion Yang Yu held off Lee Ji-Eun of South Korea in her heat to win in 2:02.75 and tipped herself to retain her title.

"In tonight's final I will try to better my time from the morning," she said. "My biggest rival is myself."

Yang collected three gold medals in the Asian Games four years ago and qualified with the third fastest time of 2:02.75, ahead of Japan's Norie Urae, who claimed a place in the final on her 20th birthday.

In the women's 100m butterfly, Zhou Yafei of China won her head-to-head in the heats with Japan's Ayako Doi and both go forward to the evening's final along with Yuko Nakanishi, who came second to Tao Li of Singapore in a tactical first heat.

Nakanishi, the Olympic bronze medalist over 200m, is the butterfly racer Chinese swimmers fear most, but she said she needs to swim faster to conquer here.

"I was surprised that my qualifying time was so slow," she said.

Rising star Wang Qun, only 13, claimed her heat with ease in the 50m breaststroke and will be up against teammate Ji Liping, the Asian champion, in the final.

AFP

Wet, angry Pinoy athletes, officials

By Ted S. Melendres, *Sports Editor*

DOHA, QATAR—THEY STOOD SLIGHTLY drenched and shivering in the cold Arabian night for 20 minutes, waiting for their buses to arrive. They had just come from the biggest show of their lives and only wanted to hit their bunks early.

They had battles to fight the next day.

15TH ASIAN GAMES
DOHA 2006

In the mercy of a rare drizzle kicked up by the onset of winter in this part of Doha where the temperatures of the sea and the desert merge, the 120 or so Filipino athletes and officials could only pray they wouldn't catch colds, or worse, the flu.

The holding area where they were herded by Games security officers was out in the open and no one could get out of it despite the drizzle.

Pleas by Filipino officials to be let back into the stadium fell on deaf ears. Anger simmered and everyone began to get restless. When the heavy rains finally came, all hell broke loose.

The Filipinos, including flag-bearer Paeng Nepomuceno, the Japanese and the Indonesians literally stormed the gates after security men allowed a Qatari athlete back in. A riot dangerously close to erupting was defused when security officials opened the gates again and the athletes came running for shelter in the stadium and other covered areas.

"Everyone was dripping wet and angry," said RP delegation administrative officer Nestor Ilagan, who was part of the group of Philippine Olympic Committee officials Julian Camacho and Joey Romasanta that initially braved the downpour.

Ilagan said athletes and officials stood at the mercy of the elements waiting for the waves of 20 buses to fetch them.

The problem was it took the buses more than 30 minutes to board up the athletes due to security checks and other loading protocols.

Triathlete Araullo races against time

By Jasmine W. Payo

TOP TRIATHLON BET SANDRA ARAULLO has always been racing against time.

Yet when a devastating injury hit Araullo just months before the Asian Games, she felt unsure if she could also speed up her recovery.

"I was skeptical," admitted the 25-year-old triathlete.

Araullo, a silver medalist in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games, broke her right collarbone in a bike accident while training in Australia last April.

"My fitness level then was pretty good, better than the last SEA Games," she said.

During therapy, Araullo wondered if she could regain her competitive form in the grueling swim-bike-run sport.

"My back muscles weakened," she noted. "Technically, my preparation for the Asian Games started in September. It was hard because I also gained weight. So aside from training, I needed to lose weight."

Eventually, Araullo thought her injury brought her more good than harm.

"Mentally I'm stronger," said Araullo. "I'm more confident that I can come back from a serious setback. It was a blessing in disguise."

Such positive outlook is needed when the country plunges in the Asian Games triathlon competition for the first time on Dec. 8 and 9.

Araullo will be leaving for Doha, Qatar, today with bronze SEAG medalist Arland Macasieb and young bets LC Langit and Mikki Quilala.

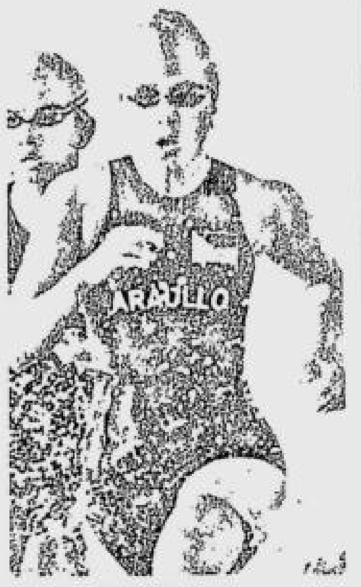
"Our best placing will be number six or seven," predicted Araullo. "We're hoping for a top 10 finish. I'll be happy with that given the circumstances."

Araullo, who's also juggling her masteral studies in physics at the University of the Philippines Diliman, picked Japan and China as the heavy favorites.

"Japan is sending representatives who compete in world-class events," she noted. "China, they're really preparing for the Olympics. This is a warm up for them, so we're expecting them to perform well."

Understandably, possible competition mishaps worry Araullo.

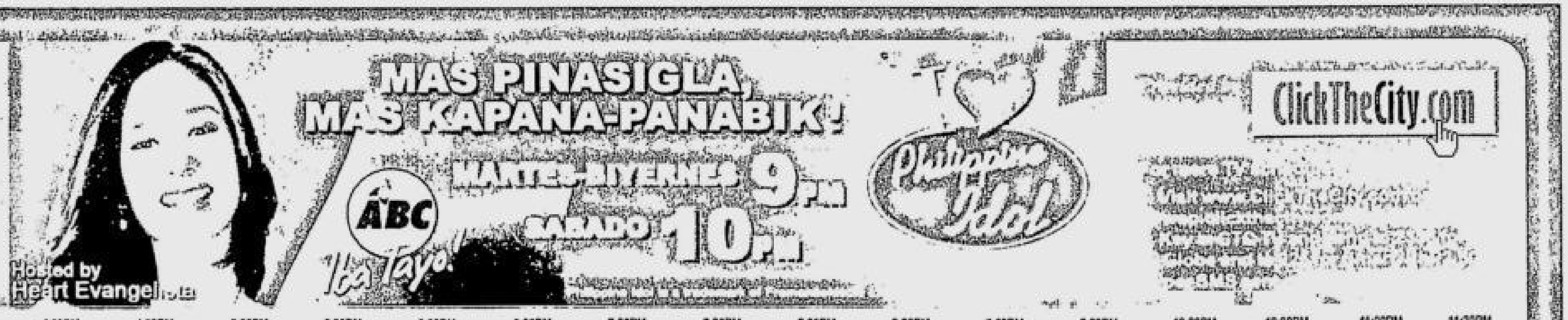
"Triathlon is hard because it's one time, big time," she said. "There are no eliminations, no age group. Unlike in swimming, there's the 100 meters, 200-m, there are many chances to win a medal. A lot of things can also go wrong. There can be accidents. It's not easy. But we have prepared enough."



SANDRA ARAULLO

INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Sunday December 3, 2006



Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5		Ringside		PBA										Philippine Idol		Worst Case Scenario		Light Talk	
ABS-CBN 2	Your Song	Lovespell		The Buzz				TV Patrol World	Rated K (6:45 PM)		Sharon (7:45 PM)		Pinoy Dream Academy						
AXN							Samsung Sports World			The Amazing Race (Season X)				CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 6)					
bTV		TV Shopping		NBA: 76ers @ Nets					NBA Jam Local	EUROLeague				NBA Fantasy Hoops	NBA: 76ers @ Nets				
Cartoon Network	Camp Lazlo	Baby Looney Tunes	Tom & Jerry Tales	All New Popeye Show				My GYM Partner's A Monkey/ Pokemon	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	Courage The Cowardly Dog			The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Ben 10	Teen Titans	The Simpsons	Harvey Birdman (10:45PM)	Justice League	The Batman
Cinemax			Kiss And Tell			The Shadow (5:10 PM)				Passenger 57				Anacondas: The Hunt For The Blood Orchid				Interview With The Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles	
CNN	Next@CNN	World News	Living Golf/Living Golf/Main Sail/Art Of Life	World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	World News	Inside The Middle East/CNN Biz Traveller/ Global Office/ Global Challenges	World News	World Sport	Talk Asia	Living Golf/ Revealed/ MainSail/Art of Life	World News	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Late Edition Live	
Crime/Suspense		Profiler		Traffic		LO: Criminal Intent + LO: Special Victims Unit		C/S Chronicles: Cold Case Files		Law Firm + Revelations		TRSR Hunters + Threshold		Traffic		Oz		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice	
Discovery Channel				American Chopper		Tribe				Hour Asia									
Disney Channel	Maya & Miguel	Totally Spies		Kim Possible	Lilo & Stitch	Hannah Montana	American Dragon Yr. 2	Emperor's New School	The Suite Life Of Zack And Cody/ Shuriken School	Mr. Bean/ Kim Possible	Wonderful World Of Disney			America's Funniest Home Videos/ Mr. Bean	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Martin Mystery	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Women's Pro Billiards '06		Atlantic Coast Conf. Georgetown Vs Duke				Yachting World Match Racing Tour '06				NFL's Greatest Moments		NFL Football Packers @ Seahawks					
ETC		Saturday Night Live		Insider Weekend	Rated Oh! 6	American Dreams		One Tree Hill		America's Next Top Model		Friends	Simple Life 4	Project Runway		Nip/ Tuck		Rated Oh! 6	Insider Weekend
ETC 2nd Avenue		Blowout 1		Today Show - 1 Hour - Version		Dateline		Trading Spouses		NBC Nightly News	WSJR	Nanny 911		The Director		West Wing		NBC Nightly News	Hollywood One On One
Fox News		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Fox Report Saturday		Heartland With John Kasich		The Line Up		The Journal Editorial Report	Beltway Boys	Fox & Friends Sunday						Fox News Live	
GMA 7	Gigsters	Love To Love		S-Files				Mahiwagang Baul		Hooo U?		Mel & Joey		All Star K		Daddy Di Do Du		Sunday Night Box Office	
HBO			Without A Paddle			Soul Of The Game (5:15 PM)				If Looks Could Kill			The Big Preview: Deja Vu	Kicking And Screaming				Fallen	
Hero TV	Knights Remune NG	Pretty Cure	Starship Operators	Power Rangers Ninja Storm	Mask Rider Faiz	Justirisers	Power Rangers Dino Thunder	Offside	Dear Boys	Baki The Grappler	GPX Cyber Formula	G3	Inuyasha: The Making	Yu-Gi-Overload				PeaceMaker	Starship Operators
IBC 13		Ang Bang Hanap Mo?	Custom Rides	Phil World Pool Championship							Mommy Academy	Pinoy Action Hits				Iyo Ang Katarungan	EL SHADDAI		
JackTV				Comedy Central	Premium Blend	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Daily Show Jon Stewart	Distraction	Banzai	American Dad	Family Guy	WWE Smackdown				South Park	Drawn Together	Crank Yankers	Dr. Katz
Lifestyle Network	Embellish This	DIY: Crafts	The Great Adventure	Your Private Island	Fine Living Special		Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Wolfgang Puck	Food Network Special		E! Entertainment Special						Fashion Trance	
MTV Philippines	Ultrasound Kwan	Backstage Pass Blink 182	MTV News	MTV2 5 Greatest MCs of All Time	Homecoming	Score	Boiling Points		Yo Momma	Punk'd	Wildboyz	MTV Europe Music Awards: D' Winners Are..		MTV2 Platinum Ladies of Hiphop	Craig David at Replay's 25th Anniv	MTV Hits		MTV Screen	Sessions Hall
MYX		Pinoy MYX Countdown				Take 5	MYX Bandarito	MYX News	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Presents			MYX Hit Chart			MYX Backtrax	MYXilog
National Geographic		Mega Asia		Best Of The Week		ShowReel Asia S3				Hollywood Science		Best Of The Week		ShowReel Asia S3		Nat Geo Investigates		Nat Geo Investigates	
NBN		Ting Ng Bayan		World Pool Championship								The Games Of Your Life Primer	TM Taco Masters Challenge	The Sports List		Best And Brightest			Unlimited Diving
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Quadriga	The Planet	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Pagbubuyag		Net 25 Weekend Report	DWTV Journal Weekend Edition	Tribe	Convergence	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Tamang Daan		Net 25 Weekend Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal Weekend Edition	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Asian Anime Fest: Avatar: The Legend of Aang/ Kappa Mikey		The X's	Danny Phantom	Trollz	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That/ Thumb Wrestling Federation/ All That	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	All That	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			May Lamok Sa Loob Ng Kulambo				Balasubas				Palpak-lost, Palpak-pal				Sarah G. Popstar				Utang Ni Tatang
Qtv		Lois And Clark		Elementar Gerad		Bongga Ka Star		Ang Pinaka		Pop Star Kids		May Trabaho Ka		Sunday Super Sine				Moby Dick	
RPN 9						World Poker Tour		WWE Experience		WWE Smackdown				Sunday's Big Event					The Working President
SBN 21				Buhay Pinoy		Sheperds Voice		New Life				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Kalaotanan		Gabay At Aksyon			
Solar Sports				Motoring Today		ITZ		Oro Asian Cup	Bikini Destination	Celebrity Poker				Boxing: Wright vs Quartey/ Bautista vs Andrade				World Game	
Star Movies	Tomorrow Never Dies (2:45 PM)				The World Is Not Enough					Die Another Day (6:50 PM)				Lord Of War				Enemy Of The State (11:05PM)	
Star World		The Office	Two And A Half Men	NCIS		Business Week Asia	Travel Asia	Ed		Desperate Housewives		Oprah Prime Time		NCIS		Dinner: Table For Three		Hollywood Shootout	Oprah Prime Time
Studio 23								Studio 23 Presents Special Edition			Y-Speak		Gag Itol	US Girls	Desperate Housewives (9:45 PM)		Digital Tour (10:45PM)	Badminton Extreme (11:15PM)	
UniTV				KNC Show	Ang Dating Daan			Usapang Cristiano				Believer TV		Ang Dating Daan					

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

RP chess players make good opening moves

DOHA, QATAR—TWO WINS AND ONE DRAW.

That's the Philippine record after the first round of the men's and women's individual rapid chess competition in the 15th Asian Games at the Al-Dana Indoor Hall here Saturday.

GM candidate Darwin Laylo opened the Filipinos' campaign with a victory over Mak Tong Kuan of Macau.

Dableo, who finished in a tie for seventh to 16th places in the recent Gloria Macapagal Arroyo Cup Internaitonal Open and Chess Challenge in Manila, won by default over Atta Taamra of Palestine.

Untitled Jedara Docena, 14, settled for a draw with WGM Mahri Geldyyeva of Turkmenistan in the women's encounter.

"We're satisfied with the opening-day showing of our players," said National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP) president and Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero "Butch" Pichay.

"But the real test will come in the next few days when our players get the chance to play some of the world's best," added Pichay.

NCFP secretary-general and Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino said the three Filipinos should do well in the next two rounds to remain in the hunt for the elusive gold medal.

"Actually, Jedara had a chance to beat her Turk rival with the black pieces, but she missed the winning line under time pressure," said Tolentino after a brief analysis of the game with NCFP director Wilfredo Abalos and team coach IM Oliver Dimakiling.

The Filipinos, however, face tougher days ahead.

Among the more prominent players entered in the 12-day competition are former world champion Rustam Kasimdzhanov (Elo 2672) and Alexei Bersov (2537) of Uzbekistan, GMs Bu Xiangzhi (2671) and Wang Yue (2644) of China, Krishnan Sasikiran (2675) and Pentala Harikrishna (2674) of India, GMs Dao Thien Hai (2557) and Nguyen Anh Dung (2541) of Vietnam, GMs Utut Adianto (2589) and Susanto Megaranto (2492) and GM Mohammad Al-Modaihki (2550) of host Qatar.

The first three rounds of the men's and women's rapid chess competition were scheduled Saturday, while the next three rounds will be played on Sunday.

Bautista faces Andrade in Florida today

TAMPA, FLORIDA—UNDEFEATED top Filipino prospect Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista faces a major test Saturday (Sunday in Manila) when he fights Brazilian veteran Giovanni Andrade in a 10-round tiff underneath the Winky Wright-Ike Quartey battle dubbed "The Heat Is On" at the St. Pete Times Forum here.

The card, promoted by Oscar De La Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions, will be aired live starting at 10 a.m. today on Solar Sports, and at 3 p.m. over RPN-9.

At yesterday's weigh-in held the Hyatt Regency Tampa, the 20-year-old Bautista tipped the scales at 122 lbs, while Andrade came in at 123 lbs. The Florida Boxing Commission supervised yesterday's proceedings.

Both fighters seemed ready to get it on right there on the stage built for the weigh-in.

Andrade had earlier called Bautista a "newborn" which did not sit well with the Filipino, who assured the Brazilian he would be eating a large dose of leather when they clash.

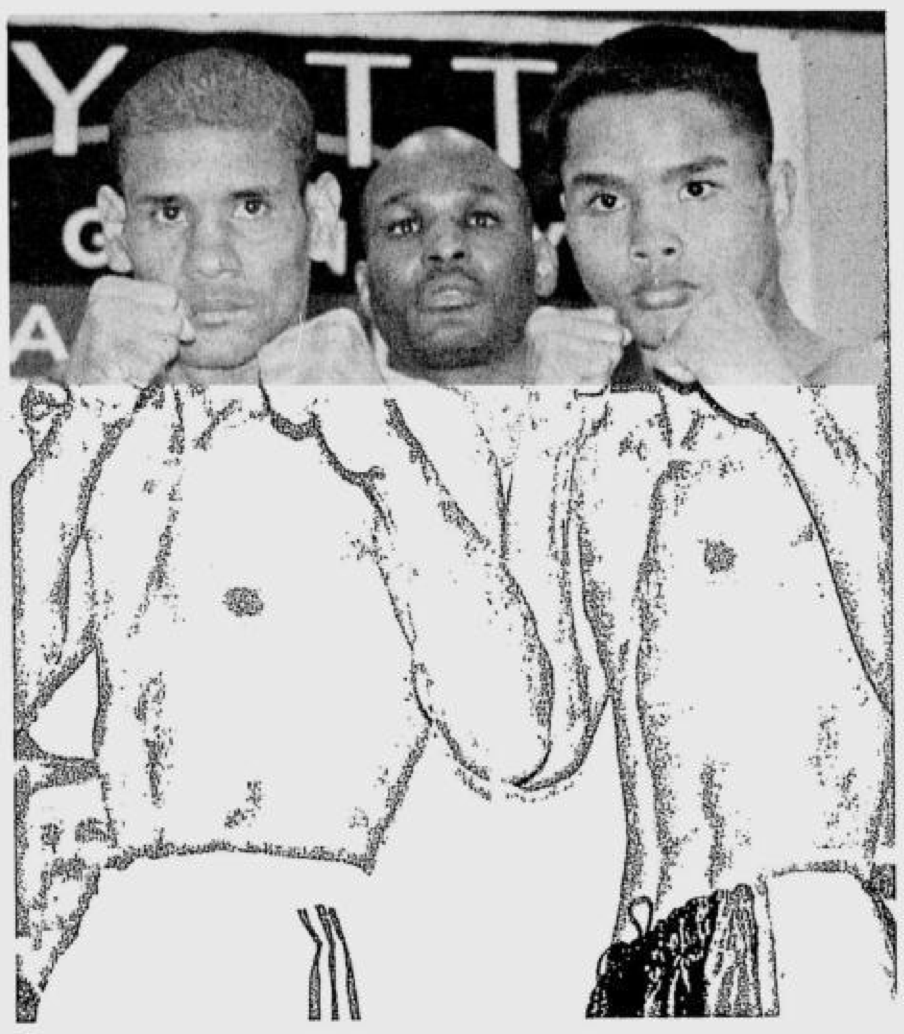
De la Hoya graced the weigh-in along with co-promoters Bernard Hopkins and Shane Mosley.

"I am as ready as can be. My team has done all its assignment. It's time for me to do my thing," said Bautista in Cebuano yesterday after the weigh-in.

The fight pits the Candijay, Bohol pride Bautista (20-0, 15 KOs) against the veteran Andrade (52-9, 43 KOs) in what is shaping up to be a battle between hard punchers.

"Bautista cannot afford to lose this fight," said promoter Sammy Gello-ani.

Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor



REY "Boom Boom" Bautista (right) and Giovanni Andrade pose with Bernard Hopkins after yesterday's weigh-in at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Tampa, Florida.

Mon's 'Tisoy' in Cebu; Terry's now an Ecleo

THE TEXT MESSAGE FROM TEDDY Perena of Team Ads was timely.

Just the day before, a Mon Fernandez fan was inquiring about his idol—where he is now, what he does for a living—stuff like these. Actually, there were many before Teddy who had also asked about the PBA's El Presidente, one of only two four-time PBA MVP's (the other is Alvin Patrimonio).

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

According to Teddy, he had just been to Cebu, where he was invited to dine and have a few drinks at a resto-bar in Mandaue.

Teddy was surprised to learn that the place is owned by Don Ramon, who is now based in Cebu.

"The resto-bar is at Fortuna Street and it's called 'Tisoy'. That's what they call Mon here, 'Tisoy'," Teddy said.

From what I gleaned, Mon has started a new life in the queen city of the south. Teddy didn't say though, if the PBA's El Presidente is still involved with basketball.

* * *

Another PBA cager whose whereabouts accidentally came my way is Terry Saldaña, a former teammate of Mon.

Terry, best remembered for a miraculous comeback after almost all the ligaments in his knee (except two) were torn following a bad fall, is now living in a remote Luzon province, I was told.

"By affiliation, he has become a member of the feared cult," Terry's former teammate informed me.

The cager from Olongapo, who played for the pro league at age 19 as a hardship case, is now the husband of Ruben Ecleo's daughter, he said.

Ecleo, Terry's father-in-law, is the leader of the much-publicized Philippine Benevolent Society, with whom nobody wants to mess around. Surely you've read the horrors written about the Ecleo family, of which Terry is now part.

Looking at the positive side though, at least now I know who I can run to if I want an enemy triple-whammied.

* * *

Harbour Centre's Mikee Romero has been very secretive these days.

Although we get to chat often, it was from an outside source that I had to hear about his "deep negotiations" for the acquisition of an existing PBA franchise.

I could not confirm the report at the time I got it because Mikee was in Bangkok then, on a business trip.

* * *

Probably because the Ultra is hardly being used by the PBA, the PSC has decided to convert Bldg A (the building that houses the PBA offices), into an athletes' quarters.

Consequently, the PBA is vacating the premises and moving to a new building in Eastwood, Libis, Quezon City, perhaps before year's end.

What a waste, considering that the league spent more than P2 million renovating the place only three years ago.

SPORTSWATCH

Espiritu tops UCAP-Aktivade

FORMER Marlboro Tour champion Victor Espiritu stamped his class in the centerpiece Elite category at the second leg of the UCAP-Aktivade November to Remember cycling championships held last Sunday at the Quezon Memorial Circle. Still showing the power that made him one of the Philippines' best riders in the late 90s, Espiritu outclassed 2nd placer Joeffrey Talaver, who was adjudged Sprint King, and third placer Sherwin Carrerra. In the Junior Category, Jeffrey Monton emerged triumphant against John Erick Ballecer and Stephene Romaquir while the Master A category title went to Alex Billar, who beat Roel Gendrano and Placido Valdez. Alfredo Santiago bagged the Master B class diadem over Andres Anario and Benito Reginio while in the Executive category, Francisco Mercado ruled over Gillarte and Reynald Guevarra.

Big Dome hosts World Slasher Cup

THE WORLD SLASHER CUP INVITATIONAL 8-COCK DERBY, UNFOLDS AT THE Araneta Coliseum on Jan., 16, 18 & 20, 2007 and will be hosted by Pintakasi of Champions. Among those taking part is 2001 World Slasher champion Roger Roberts of Georgia. Other foreign participants include Joe Stanfield of California, Johnny Philips of Georgia, Eric Ong and Bobby Fairchild of Hawaii, Richard Lainier of Florida, JC Smith of Oklahoma, Kyle and Bel Menatt of Arkansas, Ric de Guzman and Rene Medina of California, Juan Melendres of Australia, Jorge Goitia of California, Vince Cuyugan of Pittsburgh and Sedfrey Linsangan of Guam. Local entries will be fielded by Danding Cojuangco, Ito Ynares, Patrick Antonio, Nene Araneta, Ronnie Puno, Rudy Albano, Lito Orillaza, Gerry Espina, Eddie Araneta, Biboy Enriquez, Boy Diaz, Ricoy and Jesry Palmares, Peping Cojuangco, Esting Teopaco, JV Magsaysay, Boyet Joson, Tony Tan, Benjie Lim, William Go, Dicky Lim, Pol Estrellado, Jet and Joel Fernando and the Jingco and Madlambayan brothers. Defending champions are Nene Abello, Joel Fernando, Dicky Lim and Philip Chiongbian. The two-cock qualifying round will be held on Jan. 16, another 2-cock semifinal round on Jan. 18 and the four-cock finals on Jan. 20. For details log on to www.aranetacoliseum.com and www.ticketnet.com.ph or call 911-2928 or 911-3101 local 8361 and 8351 (Boy San Pedro and Dong Lamoste).

Roligon derby unfolds Dec. 7

WITH OVER 250 CONFIRMED ENTRIES AS OF YESTERDAY, ROLIGON Mega Cockpit's pordabol Incredibol 5- cock derby unfolds on Dec. 7, 9, 11 and 13. The cockfest offers a guaranteed prize of P2 million for an entry fee of P6,600. As bonus, the fastest win champion will drive home the latest edition of seven –seater Toyota Avanza 1.5, now parked at Roligon lobby. "The same easy 5- cock format and affordable entry fee will be adopted," said host Rolly Ligon. For cockhouse reservations, contact 851 -2275, 833 -1638 and 852 -9812. Meanwhile, Roligon's Fastest Win One – Cock Ulutan starts at 9 a.m. today, with over 100 entries. The fastest win champ will be declared after every two fights and will get P2,500, according to operators Ronnie Lacsina, Jerry Ang and Ben4 Nadurata.

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Lightning Strike (4), Prime Enforcer (5), Red Diamond (6), Mr. Lucas (7)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Five O'Clock (7), Cheska Run (5), El Love Señora (4), Kumpirmado (3)
Race 3—Sir Luis
Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Golden Harry (7), Grand Fiesta (4), Blondie Baj (5), Words Of Joy (1)
Race 5—Landed Visa (2), Que Sera Sera (3)
Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Getting Darker (8), Olive Tan (1), Perfect Choice/Platinum Garden (9), Miss Fantasy (3), Miss Lillypilly (6)
Race 7—Don Exequiel (2), Kilimanjaro (1)
Race 8—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Fairy Queen (4), Eye Candy (9), Leave No Doubt (6), Chariot Of Fire (2), Big Deb (7)
Race 9—Jet Sutter (2)
Race 10—(Qrt/Tri)—Real Black (3), Sambat (1), U Are My Sunshine (5), Vitality (4)
Race 11—(Tri)—Real Spicy (2), Empire King (6), Vantage (3)
Race 12—(Qrt/Tri)— Hakuna Matata (8), Ahoy My Boy (2), Please Do (4), Tigres In Action (1)
Race 13—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Don't Tell Ella (9), Nice Legs (1), Windlass (2), Classic Appeal (8), Magpakailanman (10), Qui Paris (7)

Iloilo, Manila booters forge title showdown

Matches Today
(*J.F. Enriquez Memorial Sports Complex*)
7:30 a.m. MPL vs. Negros Oriental
2:30 p.m. Iloilo vs NCR

ILOILO SCRAMBLED TO A 2-0 EXTRA TIME victory over Negros Oriental yesterday to set up a title duel with arch rival National Capital Region in the PFF-National Under19 Football Championships in Zamboanga City.

The Ilonggos needed a terrific strike from Genver Vergar six minutes into extra time and another goal from Jomar Lestiongo in the 112th minute to book a return trip to the finals at the J.F. Enriquez Memorial Sports Complex. Iloilo lost to Davao, 0-1, in last year's finals.

In contrast, the NCR booters had an easier match against neophyte Muntinlupa-Parañaque-Las Piñas, coming away with a 7-1 triumph that proved to be the most convincing win of the eight-team tournament so far.

NCR drew two goals each from striker Ibrahem Mohamed and Romnick Jover, while Ansel Marcus Alvarez, German Doronila and Kurt Alvarez also booted in a goal apiece to seal the rout.

The scoreline was already 3-0 in the 33rd minute with Jover striking in the 27th and 33rd minute, before Aldous Miraflores IV pulled a goal back. But Mohamed put the outcome beyond doubt with a 51 st minute goal.

Cedelf P. Tupas, Inquirer Visayas

10th crown for Aguilar

AGUILAR

STA, BARBARA, ILOILO—MAKE it 10 for Glen Aguilar. Boosting his status as the country's most successful rider ever, Aguilar topped the three-part Camel Supercross International Championship Series 2006 and took his 10th national title before a huge crowd at the Sta. Barbara racetrack.

Tested to the hilt by former Asian Supercross champion James Robinson of New Zealand and fast-rising Kenneth San Andres, Aguilar turned in another spectacular performance in the season-ending race sanctioned by National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (NAMSSA) and promoted by Xtreme Worx.

Aguilar ruled three of the four races in the pro open and pro 125 categories to wrap up the overall title before more than 10,000 fans.

"I'm so happy to win the Camel title again. It was another great year for me," said Aguilar, known as the 'Flying A' for his gravity-defying rides and devil-may-care attitude.

Aguilar moved within one title of matching the combined 11 titles won by fellow motocross greats Jovie Saulog (7) and Jolet Jao (4) in the 80s up to the early 90s.

Robinson, winner of the Camel leg in Ormoc City held early this month, stayed in the thick of the fight against Aguilar only to fade out midway in the first moto following a costly spill while negotiating a sharp bend going into the back-breaking whoop de doos.

Miag-ao's Clarita Belarma emerged winner of the 2006 BMW F-650 GS enduro motorcycle, the grand prize in the draw of the Camel MotoGear promo tour.

Living up to his billing as the next most important star in the local supercross circuit, San Andres finished runner-up to Aguilar in both the pro open and pro 125 categories.

The other Sta. Barbara leg winners of the Camel series are Toti Alberto, (executive), Dexter Bacabac, (veterans), Alvin Beech, (intermediate), Michael Desbaro, (novice local enduro), Kenneth Pumaren (beginner production), Jovino Tuebane (beginner enduro), Heres Suresca (novice 125 and novice open production), Gilbert Elumba (underbone), and Francyl Barredo (pantra).

Woman Customs exec a dead shot on the side

TALUSAN

By June Navarro

DON'T BE DEceived by her charm and FInesse. She's the exact opposite when it comes to shooting targets on the firing range.

Driven by a passion to excel in every endeavor she puts her mind into, Mimel Manahan-Talusan has emerged as the country's top gun in practical shooting.

The customs chief at the arrival area of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Talusan says competing in her favorite sport is just an outlet to ease the rigors of the job.

"It's a therapy and an outlet to release the pressure of working for the government," said Talusan, a mother of two (Tommy, 16, and Mika, 12.)

Since picking up the sport in 2002, Talusan has collected over 50 trophies and plaques from various tournaments in the country

Her biggest achievement was being crowned 2005 national lady champion during the national open of the organizing Philippine Practical Shooting Association held in Tagaytay City.

She was also the lady rifle champion during the First Gentleman's Cup in Guimaras Island early this year.

"I always try to excel in every endeavor I'm into," said Talusan.

Talusan is also an achiever off the shooting range.

Winner of the Parangal ng Bayan Foundation Award last year as the most outstanding Filipino achiever for public service, Talusan is an advocate of Gawad Kalinga for its outreach programs and a recipient of the 2005 Amazing Alumni Award of Maryknoll (now Miriam) Foundation. Talusan's work ethic speaks well of her approach to her chosen sport.

Guided by former national coach Jojo Naranjilla and Roland Tan of Team True Weight, Talusan plunges in every practical shooting competition on weekends while firing several rounds of ammunition during her spare time.

Talusan will defend her title in the 2006 national open for practical shooting on Dec. 6-9 in Davao City the winner getting a crack at the 2008 world championship in Indonesia.

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Sunday Sports

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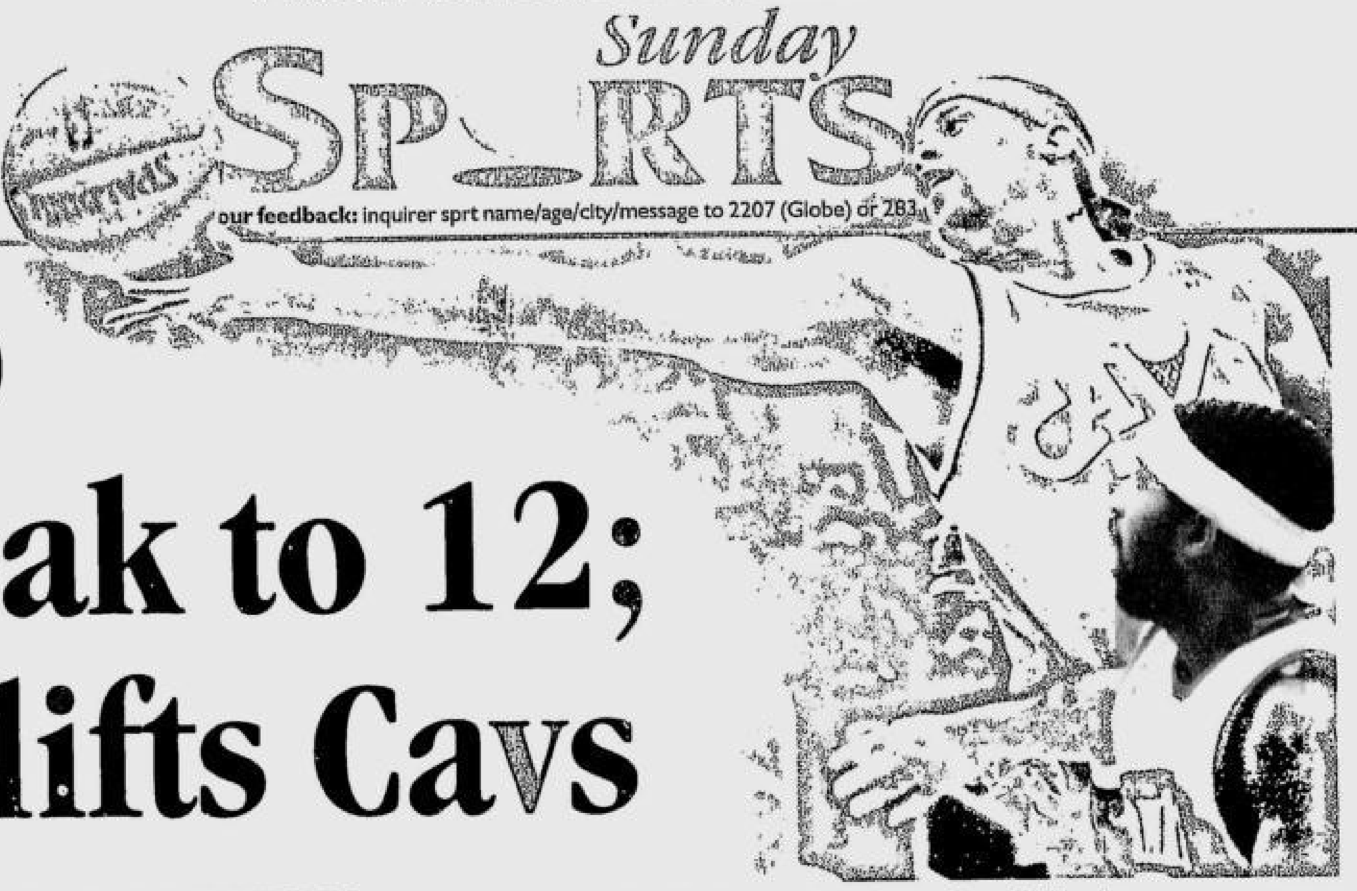
Mavs up win streak to 12; LeBron lifts Cavs


CLEVELAND forward Ira Newble reaches to keep a loose ball in play. REUTERS

DALLAS, TEXAS—JOSH HOWARD SCORED 10 OF HIS 24 points in the first five minutes on Friday as Dallas got off to another quick start en route to their 12th straight NBA win, cruising to a 109-90 victory over the Sacramento Kings.

Dirk Nowitzki had 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Mavericks, apparently feeling no after-effects after leaving the Mavs' last game on Wednesday with blurred vision.

In all Dallas had five scorers in double figures, shooting 49 percent from the field and 89 percent from the free throw line while collecting a season-high 26 assists.

For the fourth straight game, the Mavericks never trailed, pouncing on their opponents from the opening tip-off.

Austin Croshere, who once experienced a nine-game winning streak in his nine seasons with Indiana, said a double-digit winning streak was quite an accomplishment in the NBA.

"It's not an easy thing to do," Croshere said. "You can get a three-game stretch where you're playing teams under .500, or you might have a four-game home stand.

"But in 10 games, you're going to have some difficult tests. So it's really not an easy thing to do. We're proud of it. But when you're in the middle of it, you just ride it and try to look at the next game and make it 11 or 12 or whatever."

At Atlanta, LeBron James scored 31 points and the Cleveland Cavaliers pulled away from the Atlanta Hawks in the fourth quarter for a 106-95 victory in the NBA on Friday.

James scored 13 points in the final period, including a trio of three-point plays. He also wowed the crowd with a couple of high-flying blocks on back-to-back possessions to ruin any hope of a comeback for the Hawks.

James, criticized after the teams' first meeting this season for walking toward the locker room in the final seconds while Atlanta dribbled out the clock, also had eight assists, seven rebounds and three steals.

At Minneapolis, Carmelo Anthony scored 35 points, Eduardo Najera outworked Minnesota's post players for a double-double, and Denver whipped the Timberwolves, 106-92.

Najera had 14 points and 11 rebounds, and all five starters scored in double figures for the Nuggets, who have won nine of the last 11 games after starting the season 0-3. Anthony has scored at least 30 points in 11 of the last 12 games.

At Washington, Gilbert Arenas, Caron Butler and Antawn Jamison each scored more than 20 points in a free-flowing game, and the Wizards ripped the Charlotte Bobcats, 121-109.

Arenas got his teammates involved early, compiling six assists before he made a field goal, and finished with 33 points and 10 assists. Butler scored 24 points and Jamison added 22, as Washington improved to 6-2 at home; it's 0-7 on the road.

Adam Morrison led Charlotte with 23 points on the day he was honored as Eastern Conference rookie of the month, and Brevin Knight added 22 points and nine assists.

At Toronto, Chris Bosh had 25 points and 11 rebounds as the Raptors improved to 5-2 at home by nosing out the Boston Celtics, 106-92.

TJ Ford had 13 assists and 10 points for the Raptors, who are only 1-8 on the road.

At Auburn Hills, Michigan, Tayshaun Prince matched his career high with 31 points, Chauncey Billups added 22 points and 16 assists, and Detroit won its eighth straight game via a 108-100 decision over the Isaiah Thomas-coached New York Knicks.

The Pistons haven't lost since a 100-99 defeat to New Orleans dropped them to 3-5 on Nov. 15. New York has lost six of seven.

Richard Hamilton added 26 points for Detroit, going 11-for-11 from the line, while Rasheed Wallace had 14 rebounds.

At Oklahoma City, Andres Nocioni scored a career-high 31 points, including two late free throws, and Chicago held off a series of comebacks for a 111-108 tripping of the Hornets, the Bulls' third straight victory.

Luol Deng added 21 points, while Kirk Hinrich and Ben Gordon each scored 17. *AFP, AP*

Pacman's former promoter in trouble

TAMPA, FLORIDA—PROMOTER Murad Muhammad, who once promoted fights for superstar Manny Pacquiao, is in danger of losing his license and may no longer be allowed to promote fights after his issued checks bounced in the Evander Holyfield-Fres Oquendo heavyweight fight.

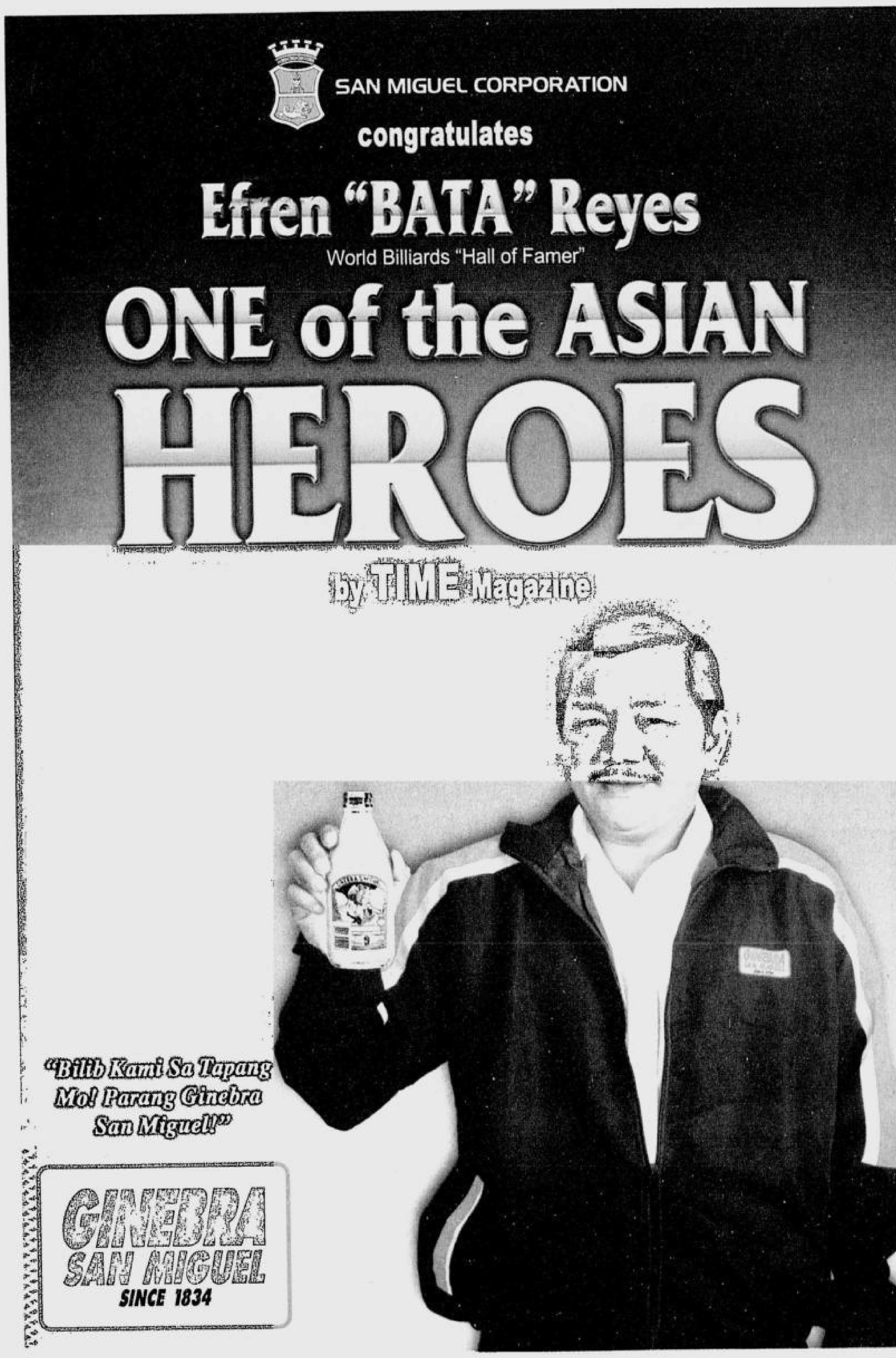
A lawyer for Lou Dibella is reportedly working on permanently barring Muhammad from being a part of the sport due to his previous negative record in the business.

Dibella manages Oquendo, who complained of bounced checks after the Nov. 10 fight where he lost to Holyfield via decision.

Dibella is currently in Tampa to be at ringside when his other ward, Jeff Lacy, takes on the undefeated Vitali Tsypko in the co-feature of today's "The Heat Is On" card.

Muhammad had also been sued by Manny Pacquiao after he allegedly took big chunks of the superstar's rich purses, but an out-of-court settlement prevented a long-drawn court war.

Muhammad also tried to entice Gerry Peñalosa and Z Gorres into his promotional fold, but the two fighters went back to the Philippines highly disappointed for not getting any fight in the United States.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DLSU eyes sweep; UE takes on UST

GAMES TODAY (*Philsports Arena*)
12 nn—UE vs UST
2 p.m.—San Beda vs Letran
4 p.m.—JRU vs La Salle
6 p.m.—FEU vs UP

SO FAR, NO TEAM HAS RUINED the De La Salle University Green Archers' focus in the FilOil-Flying V Homegrown Invitational Cup.

Clearly hungry for competition, the Archers will shoot for an elimination-round sweep and a semifinal berth versus the Jose Rizal Bombers at 4 p.m. today at the Philsports Arena.

La Salle coach Franz Pumaren said the Archers have been reeling from a tough period after serving their suspension in UAAP basketball.

"It was difficult motivating the players, but this tournament changed things for us," noted Pumaren.

Pumaren's younger brother Dindo and his University of the East Warriors will also vie for a semifinal slot against UAAP champion Santo Tomas Tigers at 12 noon.

In the eliminations, the 10 varsity squads were divided into two groups. Teams only played against schools in the opposing group.

The top two teams in each group will advance to the semifinal round. But this time, teams compete within their group in a knockout format.

The San Beda Lions will battle the Letran Knights at 2 p.m., while the Far Eastern Tamaraws and the University of the Philippines Maroons tangle in the 6 p.m. nightcap.

Unbeaten in four games, the Archers' return to competitive action has been anchored on Rico Maierhoffer and JV Casio.

Yet JRU, the surprise leader in Group A, hopes to upset La Salle behind Mark Cagoco and JR Sena.

The Tigers, meanwhile, will try to follow up on their 65-64 triumph over NCAA champion San Beda.

Team B cagers Hector Badua and Kasim Mirza stepped up in the closing minutes to lift the Tigers in their second win in four games.

The Tigers pulled off the victory last week despite the absence of Jojo Duncil, Dylan Ababou, June Cortez and Anthony Espiritu, the vital cogs in their UAAP championship run.

"Some of our Team A players have been busy in the PBL, but we're adjusting and the players are working hard in practice," said assistant coach Beaujing Acot, who called the shots in the Tigers' previous outing. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Real Spicy favored

By Musong R. Castillo

REAL SPICY, THE CHAMPION four-year-old who has been undefeated this year, sets out as the outstanding favorite in the seventh running tonight of the Philtobo Grand Championship Classic at the Santa Ana Park in Makati.

Up against four other chargers, including fellow former Presidential Gold Cup winner Empire King, the son of Real Quiet out of Spicy Tale has been flaunting unbeatable form of late and is expected to corner majority of the bettings.

Post time is around 7:30 p.m., with the race set over a lung-busting 2,050 meters, even as last minute repairs are being done on the track to ensure that men and beasts are safe for another busy 13-day schedule where three other major stakes races are on tap.

Jessie B. Guce rides Real Spicy, winner of the Gold Cup two years ago, while Lord Santos pilots Empire King, who won the prestigious and rich race last year, in the hunt for the P300,000 champion's prize.

Meanwhile, the organizing Philtobo and representatives of the host track are doing round-the-clock work after concerns on safety popped up two weeks ago because of the deteriorating condition of the track.

Jess Cantos, chair of the organizing committee, yesterday confirmed to the INQUIRER, in a telephone call, that several big-time horseowners have thought of scratching their entries for fear of injuries to their horses and jockeys.

"That is being addressed as we speak," Cantos said. "Yes, there were some concerns aired by the horseowners, which are all valid."

The sand filling on the track has reportedly thinned so much that several horses suffered career-threatening foot injuries two weeks ago. The track is currently being filled with filtered sand.

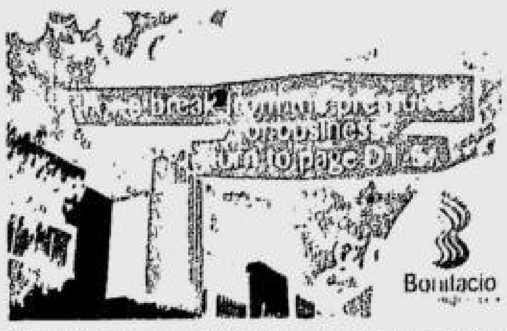
Don Paolo (Patti Dilema), Vantage (JA Apellido) and Lord of All (Esteban de Vera) round out the compact Classic field even as Triple Crown leg winner Don Exequiel leads a four-horse field vying in the Ambassador Antonio Lagdameo Cup, the Philtobo's three-year-old Colts championship.

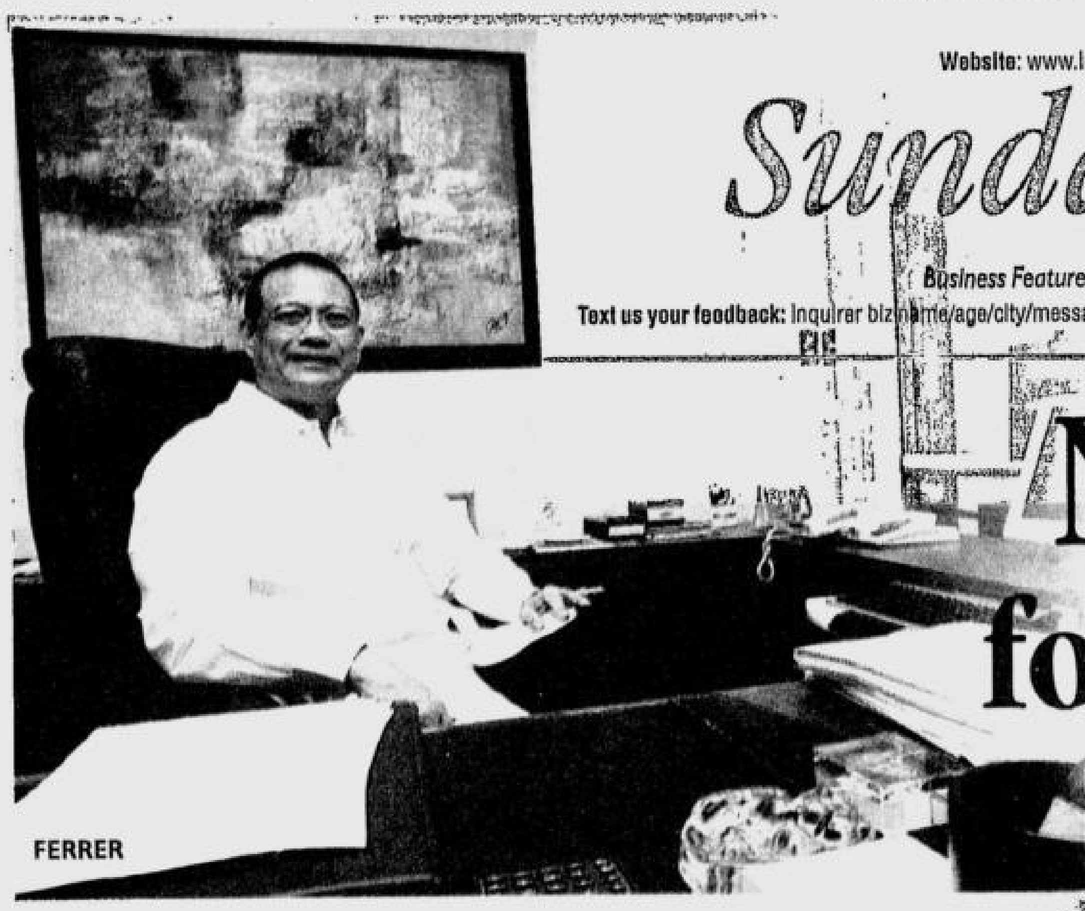
Website: www.inq7money.net

Sunday BIZ

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

Text us your feedback: Inquirer biz name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph





FERRER

No dream too big for small town boy

Richard Ferrer shared meager family resources with 12 siblings, but he managed to go far

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

MAKATI MEDICAL CENTER president and CEO Richard M. Ferrer was a small town boy who dreamed big.

He did so even if he knew that it would be almost impossible for him to achieve his heart's desires because he was the 6th of 13 children and his parents' meager finances were stretched thin.

Despite this, he achieved all, except his dream to be a surgeon.

FIRST JOB

Ferrer became a teacher instead, after getting a degree in English and Political Science from the University of Pangasinan.

An intelligent student, he completed his courses in three and a half years and spent the last semester in a law preparatory course, while teaching English and Political Science.

From there it was on to law school.

He insisted on it even if his father had warned him against being too ambitious as those who fly high fall fast.

But Ferrer had the brains to see his dreams through. He got a scholarship from the Ateneo Law School (then in Padre Faura) that covered tuition fee and books. To provide for his board and lodging, he worked at the National Media Production Center.

It was tough for a Pangasinense to do full time work and study at the same time. It took its toll on his body although his grades remained high.

Two sisters who visited him saw this and took it upon themselves to ask him to stop working and they will instead provide for the board and lodging of their ambitious brother.

Good decision

They were not wrong in their decision—Ferrer landed 5th on the list of top bar examinees of 1977.

He worked for a couple of years with then top criminal lawyer Rodolfo U. Jimenez Law Office.

From law, Ferrer shifted to business, another ambition of his. He worked with the Ayala Corp. starting as corporate counsel to managing director in 2001. In between he managed to earn a Management degree from the Asian Institute of Management.

He capped his 22 years with the Ayalas by setting up the first Honda Car dealership in the Philippines.

After law and business, it was time to pursue another dream—be a politician.

From 2001 to 2004, he worked as deputy executive secretary under the Office of the President.

But his political career was cut short by PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan who pirated him from government.

Although he is CEO of Makati Med, Ferrer remains as first vice president of the Office of the Chair of PLDT.

"I was helping MVP in his curricular and extra curricular involvements, except basketball, such as the PBSP (Philippine Business for Social Program) and then MMC," he explains.

Debt burden

He was with Pangilinan from the first board meeting the PLDT head attended as a new MMC board member. Pangilinan was asked by the board to join in July 2004. By the time Ferrer was made president and CEO of the hospital, he already knew the ins and outs of the issues facing it.

"I did not apply for the job but I was totally prepared for it—construction, selling and marketing, changing of culture, IT—because of my experience in Honda. Except for one area—debt restructuring," Ferrer states.

Makati Med faces a P1.2-billion debt bur-

NO DREAM/ B2

LOOKING over results from a 64-slice machine—one of Makati Med's new high tech equipment

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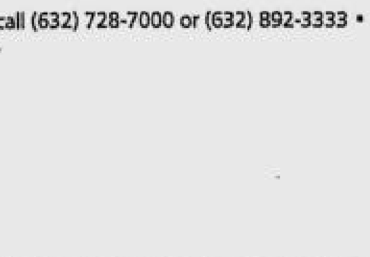

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Creating inspirations from recycled wood

At 42, homemaker starts venture that earns a profit and helps the environment

Text and photos by Russell Arador
Inquirer Central Luzon

STA. IGNACIA, TARLAC—Karmen Blesilda Pascual is an environmentalist and an entrepreneur rolled into one.

As owner of a company that specializes in the making products out of recycled wood, Pascual, 46, not only earns a respectable profit but, more importantly, also helps in the preservation of the environment.

Woodinspiration, the company that she and her husband, Glenn, put up in 2002 produces home and office items like memo holders, mug trays and racks, key chains, jewelry boxes, vases, bread baskets and picture frames.

Prior to 2002, Karmen was a homemaker.

All their products are either wood-based or made entirely of wood salvaged from crates used by carrier companies to transport equipment and products over land and sea.

Palochina crates

What they do, Pascual says, is buy these crates, mostly made of palochina, in piers and ports then take them apart and sort the planks according to length and width.

If wide and long enough, some pieces are glued, nailed or tied together to form a magazine rack. If not, these are made into small items like key and pen holders or mini drawers.

Key holders

"Nothing is wasted. Even the smallest piece of wood has its use," she says.

The challenge is in making the most out of a limited supply of raw materials.

"The size and quality of the wood that we get put a limit on what we can produce but we make the most out of the situation," Pascual says.

"It only takes imagination and creativity," she adds, despite the fact that the cost of wooden crates is rising and the planks that make them up are getting thinner, narrower and shorter.

Indigenous materials

Aside from recycling wood, the four-year-old company also uses indigenous materials as accessories to its products.

Candle holders, for instance, are studded with coconut beads and decorated with dried leaves. Also, parts are tied together using *abaca* strands while wooden vases are filled with bamboo reeds for effect.

Except for the imported glue used, their materials are sourced locally, she says.

Pascual also sees the potential of bamboo stalks and reeds, which are abundant in her hometown, as a material for her products.

Woodinspiration owner Karmen Blesilda Pascual

Colorful jewelry boxes for the young

"Bamboo and wood make good combination," she says.

This is the reason why, when she first applied for a slot in the Department of Trade and Industry's annual national trade fair years back, she told her interviewer that she would want to explore the various uses of bamboo stalks for her business.

Creating jobs

When the Pascuals started Woodinspiration in 2002, there were only three people—Pascual, Glenn and a worker. She would design the concepts and her husband would execute the design with the assistance of their worker.

Together they would attend trainings, seminars and trade exhibits sponsored by DTI.

Now, the firm employs three regular and two contractual workers. During peak seasons, they employ as many as 15 workers to perform various tasks including packaging, trimming and accessorizing.

They have been able to generate jobs for farming families by buying processed bamboo stalks from them.

In terms of technology, the firm has replaced some hand-operated tools with electrically powered machines.

The firm, Pascual says, has diversified into making frames for *lahar*-based religious figurines produced by a company in Pampanga.

For the good start that her business has enjoyed, Pascual acknowledges the important role of DTI. "They helped a lot," she says.

But more crucial is the support she's getting from her family.

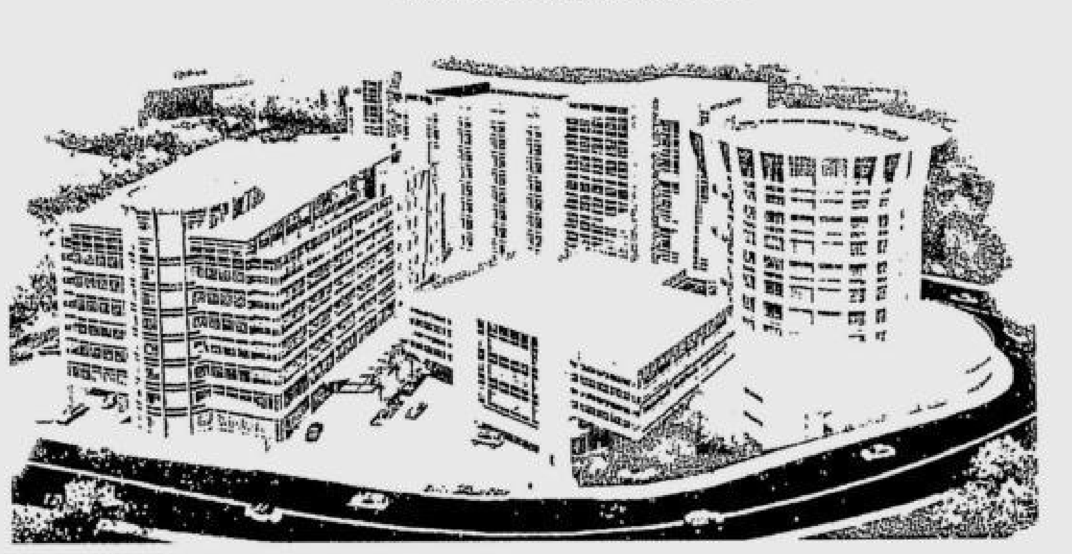
Candle holders and tall vases

ALL PHOTOS BY RUSSELL ARADOR

"We're a close family. Everybody participates. My children even made the company's e-mail address. We try to enjoin them to be active in our business because sooner or later, *sa kanila mapupunta ito* (they will inherit this)," she says.

Two of their three children are taking Fine Arts at the University of the Philippines Baguio.

"They must have realized they must align their interest along the nature of the family business," she says.


THE FUTURE Makati Medical Center

How MMC is recovering from ICU

LAWYER RICHARD M. FERRER BRUSHES aside the title "turnaround king," saying the process is only starting and the P160-million net income that Makati Medical Center is expected to earn this year is the result of a series of moves by several groups.

News of MMC's ICU state, in terms of its finances, made news last year, followed immediately by PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan's entry into one of the country's premier hospitals' board.

The choice of Ferrer to carry out the rehabilitation plans for MMC was not an obvious one. The new board of the hospital interviewed 21 applicants but eventually they realized they had the right man under their noses.

The final approval came from the doctors who own 40 percent of the hospital.

Prior to this, the board had invited Asian Institute of Management professor Gabino Mendoza to be its president in June 2005 but after he implemented two very important but very unpopular decisions, Mendoza resigned as the hospital's president.

"But these decisions—retrenchment of 302 people and changing of department heads—paved the way for the turnaround," says Ferrer in an interview with SundayBiz.

The highest net income the hospital has ever achieved in its 37-year history, according to Ferrer was about P35 million.

In 2004, the board declared a net income of P25 million and declared dividends.

When auditing firm Isla Lipana PriceWaterhouseCoopers did its due diligence, it was discovered that the hospital was in the red by P300 million.

Last year, MMC earned P25 million.

But how was this initial turnaround achieved?

"It's a long, continuous process," he says.

Ferrer states what was done was plug the leaks in many areas.

He does not expound, but reports have come out on discrepancies, especially in purchasing and pharmacy.

Ferrer's words to describe the steps taken to clean up the hospital were good governance, and transparency.

"We have a working board, not a country club rubber stamp board, we are dealing with a culture—a hospital is typically doctor centric; how do you make it customer centric?" he says.

He adds that at the end of the day, "a hospital is still a business."

Margie Quimpo-Espino

No dream too big for small town boy

From page B1

den. It is through this debt that Pangilinan, via the Metro Pacific Investments Corp., will get a big stake in the hospital.

Due diligence and talks are ongoing between MMC, which is 40 percent owned by the doctors, and the Pangilinan group on how much of the debt will be converted into equity which will in turn pave the way for the establishment of a new P900 million building where the parking lot is today.

The amount includes the cost of new equipment.

The new building will only have operating rooms, special equipment and some offices. It will be connected by bridgeways to the older building which will also be refurbished.

Ferrer says MMC expects a cash flow of P550 million this year and a net income of P160 million.

The Metro Pacific group is expected to invite other investors to plough in money into the hospital. The single biggest shareholder in Makati Med is the Araneta-Fores group. Big companies like San Miguel Corp., and Philippine Airlines have one percent share each.

But Ferrer says debt restructuring is one of the fortes of Pangilinan and the PLDT chair serves as his guide in this area.

Ferrer says he has achieved what he has set to achieve in his life.

"I choose few activities but I made sure I do them well."

Lending to someone who may not pay you back

By Ephraim Aguilar
Legazpi City

HOW CAN YOU LEND MONEY TO a poor man if you know there is no guarantee he can pay you back?

The Simbag sa Pag-asenso (Response to Progress) Inc., a lending institution benefiting 20,756 households in over 500 villages in Albay and Camarines Sur, has an answer to this question.

It started as one of the poverty alleviation programs of the Social Action Center (SAC) of the Diocese of Legazpi here, called the Socio Economic Development Program (SEDP), until it became a separate institution under the name "Simbag sa Pag-asenso" in January 2003.

The institution does not only help villagers finance their small businesses and expand them but also offers other services such as training in advanced business entrepreneurial skills, leadership and project management.

Its members also undergo spiritual and values formation training.

Carmen Orlin, 33, of Barangay Mauyod in this city used to live with her family in a nipa hut with a sari-sari store, she put up with a P1,000 capital.

Orlin then heard of Simbag sa Pag-asenso and became member in March 2003. She borrowed P5,000 for additional capital.

Now, she can loan up to P25,000 through Simbag's "asenso loan," given to members who have faithfully undergone the training of the institution and have performed well as a member.

"Before I joined SEDP, I had a smaller capital and there were only very few items I could sell in my store," Orlin says. "The SEDP was like an answer to my prayers."

She says the training being conducted by SEDP Inc. played a great part in the growth of her business.

"All I knew before was simple arithmetic," Orlin said. "I have been trained to be more organized and more careful in managing my business. That is why I always give priority to all our meetings and training."

Orlin says, the success of a thriving business does not solely depend on the capital. It still greatly depends on the hard work of its owner.

Orlin was brought up in a business-minded family and was trained, in the public market, where their family ran a stall during her high school and college years.

"I had not just seen but also experienced how hard it was to run a business when I was still young," Orlin says. "My parents have also set me a good example."

Banking strategy

The SEDP Inc. is a pioneering institution modeled after Grameen Bank of Bangladesh.

Grameen Bank is a microfinance organization that makes small loans, known as micro-credit, to the impoverished without requiring collateral.

The system is based on the idea that the poor have skills that are under-utilized.

The bank also accepts deposits, other services, and runs other several development-oriented businesses.

The organization and its founder, Muhammad Yunus, were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize this year.

Fr. Jovic Lobrigo, chair of the board of SAC-Legazpi, says the foremost challenge they face in poverty alleviation through the SEDP Inc. is dealing with the mindset of many Filipinos, that they have no opportunity to improve their lives.

He adds that others have asked him why the institution lends money to those who do not have the means to pay back the loan.

He says SEDP Inc. is more than just a lending institution—while it provides financial assistance to the poor, it also teaches them to be good stewards of money.

Emerson Moral, executive director of SEDP Inc., says they saw microfinance only as one strategy for social transformation, and that they were after quality over quantity.

Bigger visions

Lobrigo says 15,000 household beneficiaries of the institution already have Philhealth access. SEDP also supports 75 student scholar in Bicol. The institution now has 152 staff members assigned in 13 branches.

These SEDP personnel are well-equipped and -trained.

Moral said SEDP, which now has a portfolio worth more than P100 million, is trying to introduce additional services to its beneficiaries. It has also started to expand in areas outside Albay and Camarines Sur.

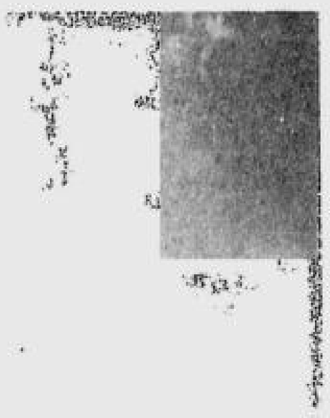
By 2007, the SEDP envisions to be of help to 25,000 poor Bicolano households, and up to 40,000 households by 2010.

Orlin now has a bigger dream—to expand her *sari-sari* store, put up a computer and Internet station, and run a copy center right in her two-story concrete house.

PFIZER Philippines won the Best Brand TV Ad at the recently-concluded 28th Catholic Mass Media Awards for its 'Kasal' commercial. The winning team includes (from left) Boots Sison, AB Communications creative director; Ten Leido AB Comm management supervisor; Tom Banguis Jr. AB Comm president; Karen Villanueva, Pfizer corporate affairs director; Cathy Ileto, Pfizer corporate communications manager and Dr. Naomi Martin, Pfizer cluster head marketing division.

HOT AIR Balloon Festival in Clark

WHITE water rafting in Cagayan



GOLF in Subic

Rediscovering northern Luzon

Breathing new life into lethargic tourism industry to spur economic development

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IT'S QUITE EASY TO IGnore the charms of northern Luzon.

The provinces are just a few hours away by car, perhaps even too accessible to the point that they are no longer seen by Filipinos in their teens and 20s as perfect places to have an adventure-filled holiday.

A group of private companies that banded together to form the North Philippines Visitors Bureau wants to change the perception that northern Luzon is not a hip and happening place.

These firms with operations north of Metro Manila want to bring back the good old days when north Luzon was the top tourist destination, with Baguio City and the Ifugao Rice Terraces considered the biggest draws.

"Rediscover the north!" is their battle cry.

HERITAGE Village of Vigan

ONE of the Hundred Islands in Pangasinan

By breathing new life into the lethargic tourism industry of northern Luzon, NPVB hopes to help bring about economic development to the provinces and at the same time enable the member-companies to earn from the boom in domestic travel.

NPVB executive director Patrick Gregorio tells the INQUIRER that NPVB is focused on luring tourists back to northern Luzon by encouraging other companies, such as pharmaceutical and multinational firms and professional associations, like lawyers or doctors' groups, to hold big events and organize large-scale conventions in northern Luzon.

"We must first give the visitors a reason to make the trip," Gregorio explains.

Once they get there, NPVB hopes that the natural and man-made attractions in northern Luzon will do the rest and entice the visitors to come back, this time for an extended vacation to relax, see the sights or play a round of golf.

The nonprofit firm works through a network of convention and visitors bureaus in six provinces—Greater Clark (Pampanga), Greater Subic (Zambales), Tarlac, Baguio, Cagayan North and Pangasinan.

It is already working on bringing La Union and Ilocos Sur into the fold before the end of the year and then all of the provinces by the middle of next year.

One convention that NPVB is banking on to push its "microeconomic strategy for tourism" is next year's much-awaited Ad Congress to be held in Subic.

"We are expecting as many as 5,000 people to come to the Ad Congress next year because Subic is more accessible than say Cebu," says NPVB trustee George Lorenzana, also of White Rock Beach Resort.

The NPVB is also working with the Philippine Basketball Association to bring games to northern Luzon and the Clark Development Corp. to make Clark's annual Hot Air Balloon Fiesta, the premier event in Central Luzon.

Companies behind NPVB include Manila North Tollways Corp., Victory Liner, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Microtel Inns and Suites, Clark Development Corp., BMW Group Philippines, RemitCard, Pagcor, Philippine Tourism Authority and Cordillera Coffee.

"We are looking for more companies to partner with to allow us to attain a critical mass of members," Gregorio says.

Gregorio, however, says that it has not been difficult to get partners as all companies realize the potential of tourism, especially in northern Luzon.

Providing the spark to tourism in northern Luzon is the new and improved North Luzon Expressway, which opened to the public in February 2004.

Renie Ticzon, MNTC vice president for marketing, says traffic patterns have changed over the past two years in that the peak traffic period going north has moved from Saturday morning to Friday evening, and going south to Manila to Monday morning from Sunday evening.

Ticzon said this means that people are now spending more time in northern Luzon than they used to because of the new expressway, which bodes well for the tourism industry.

He says northern Luzon has a lot to offer.

The old sights are still there to be appreciated by a new generation of travelers, he says, and there are more just waiting to be discovered.

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NOTICE OF SPECIAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that a Special Stockholders' Meeting of **EQUITABLE PCI BANK, INC.**, will be held on **December 27, 2006 at 3:00 p.m.** at the Francisco Santiago Hall, Mezzanine Floor, Equitable PCI Bank Tower I, Makati Avenue corner H.V. dela Costa Street, Makati City, Metro Manila, to consider and approve the matters set forth in the following Agenda:

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Certification of Notice and Quorum
III. Approval of the Plan of Merger
IV. Other Business
V. Adjournment

The record date for the determination of the stockholders entitled to notice of, and to vote at, said meeting is fixed at the close of business hours on November 20, 2006.

The last day for presenting (unsolicited) proxies to the Corporate Secretary for validation shall be on December 18, 2006 and the forum for the validation of proxies shall be convened on December 20, 2006.

Please bring any form of identification in order to facilitate registration.

(Sgd.) ATTY. SABINO E. ACUT, JR.
Corporate Secretary

Green tourism ready for the greenback

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—AN OFFICIAL OF THE Department of Tourism said the government has decided to open up environmental tourism destinations for development to add to seven key tourist attractions in northern Luzon.

Purificacion Molintas, DOT Cordillera director, said the new direction has been labeled "GREET," which stands for Grassroots Entrepreneurial Ecotourism.

Baguio remains a key North Luzon attraction. Its weather almost always draws domestic and foreign tourists at least once a year.

She said the summer capital is the DOT's primary gateway to three destinations: The rice terraces of Ifugao and the Mt. Province, the caves of Sagada (Mt. Province) and the whitewater rafting attraction of Chico River in Kalinga.

Banaue, home of the most photographed rice terraces in Ifugao, is second to Baguio as a major Cordillera tourist draw.

Tourism councils in Pangasinan have offered to include Baguio in their marketing spiels for their beaches, which attract 12 percent of the annual tourist arrival in that province.

For the moment, DOT has been promoting the Pagudpud coastline in Ilocos Norte as a counterpart to Aklan's Boracay.

Molintas said the DOT has also listed the Callao Caves in Peñablanca, Cagayan, as a primary tourist area because of their accessibility compared to Sagada's caves.

But tourists also flock to parts of north Luzon because of various interests.

Vigan, a heritage city of Ilocos Sur, and the resort and casino complex in Fort Ilocandia in Ilocos Norte draw history lovers and Chinese tourists, respectively.

The DOT said religion also plays a part in drawing tourists.

The rural town of Manaoag in Pangasinan attracts pilgrims and their trips add much to the local government's coffers.

IN HERE. IT'S AL

NEW LOOK. From vintage Americana to a classic, more modern store, TGIFriday's will sport a new look at its newest branch at the Robinson's Galleria this month.

UEM-MARA PHILIPPINES CORPORATION (UMPC)
PROJECT PROPONENT OF THE MANILA-CAVITE
TOLL EXPRESSWAY (MCTE) PROJECT

NOTICE TO ALL PROSPECTIVE SUB-CONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS

All prospective subcontractros/suppliers interested to enter into a sub-contracting/sub-letting arrangement for any part of the works or to supply any quarry/construction materials for the MCTE Project, particularly the Segment 4 of the R- Expressway Extension, are hereby advised to secure pre-qualification and accreditation from the project proponent, UEM-MARA Philippines Corporation (UMPC). This is provided for under Sections 4.4 and 15.2 (f) of the Conditions of the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contract entered into by and among UMPC THE 14th Metallurgical Construction Company (MCC) of China (the General Contractor) and the Katahira and Engineers Asia, Inc. (the Engineer).

Under Section 4.4 of the EPC Contract, it is provided that the General Contractor, MCC, shall not subcontract any part of the works without the prior recommendation of the Engineer and the approval by the Project Proponent. Further, Section 15.2 (f) provides that the Project Proponent shall rescind the EPC contract for causes attributable to the General Contractor such as, among others, sub-letting any part of the Contract Works without the approval of the Project Proponent.

Failure of any of the prospective sub-contractors/suppliers to comply with the pre-qualification and accreditation requirements with UMPC shall result to non-payment of any services rendered or materials supplied to the project and will likewise be blacklisted by UMPC.

Please be informed further that giving bribes, gifts, commissions and other forms of renumeration to the General Contractor, its personnel or representatives to get sub-contract works or for supply of construction materials is strictly prohibited and shall not be honored by UMPC for payment of services performed and materials supplied.

FOR STRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL CONCERNED

JENNIFER E. BOTE
President and General Manager

EASTWOOD
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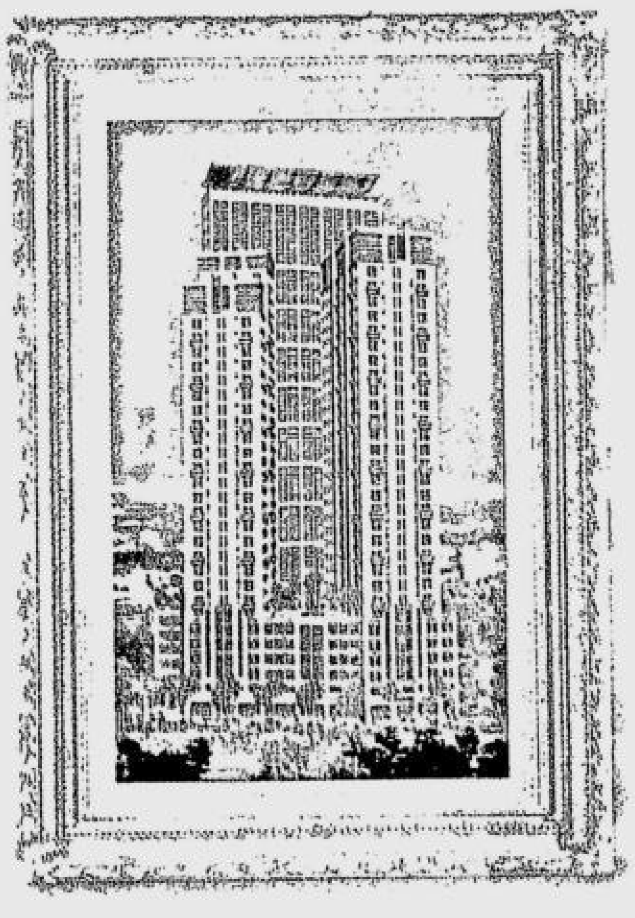
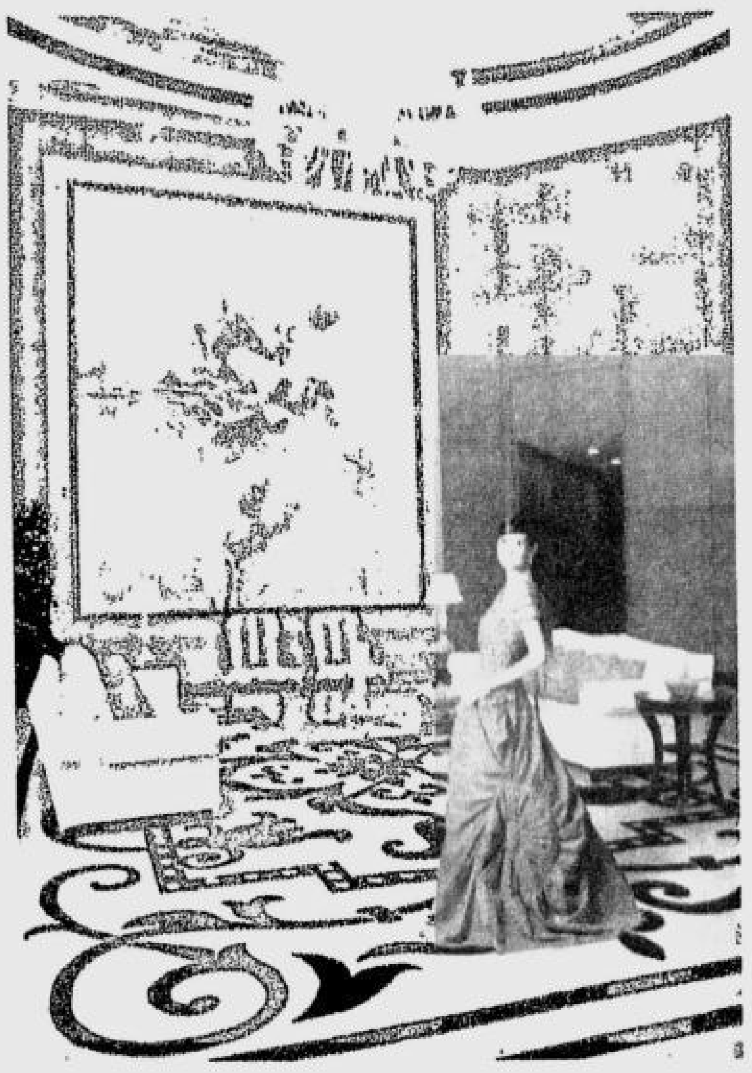
at Eastwood City



IF YOU'RE NOT HERE, YOU'RE NOT IN.



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For Announcement Purposes Only

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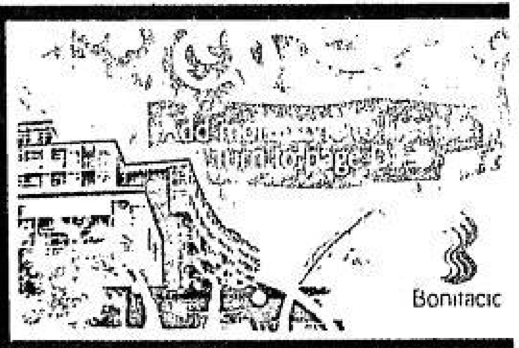
- **Tessa!** Sweet gifts are made of these /E4

Sunday LIFESTYLE
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso
sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Glob rt) or email us at lif nquirer.com.ph


Bonifacio

FAMILY DESTINATION

HK Disneyland, here we come!

The bicycle and go-kart the kids wanted for Christmas? They were, by unanimous decision, waived in favor of Mickey and Minnie

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MICKEY Mouse, Minnie Mouse and Goofy lighting up the holidays

THAT SWEET SMELL OF cinnamon wafting in the air from Main Street to Sleeping Beauty's Castle wasn't intentional. But when you're in Hong Kong Disneyland for the first time, everything seems possible.

That happened to me the first time I was there—the first time I was in any Disneyland, for that matter—around this time last year. I thought the smell was part of the whole experience. Turned out it just came from freshly baked popcorn on the bend just before you made a right turn to Tomorrowland. And it was not even cinnamon.

Thinking about it now, I didn't see much the first time I was there. I was part of the entourage of national athletes, coaches and media people who went there to fete the 2005 Southeast Asian Games overall championship.

My fellow sportswriters didn't show much interest in queuing up in long lines for rides and shows. I guess, just like me, they were convinced this kind of trip would have been a whole lot

HK DISNEYLAND/ C2

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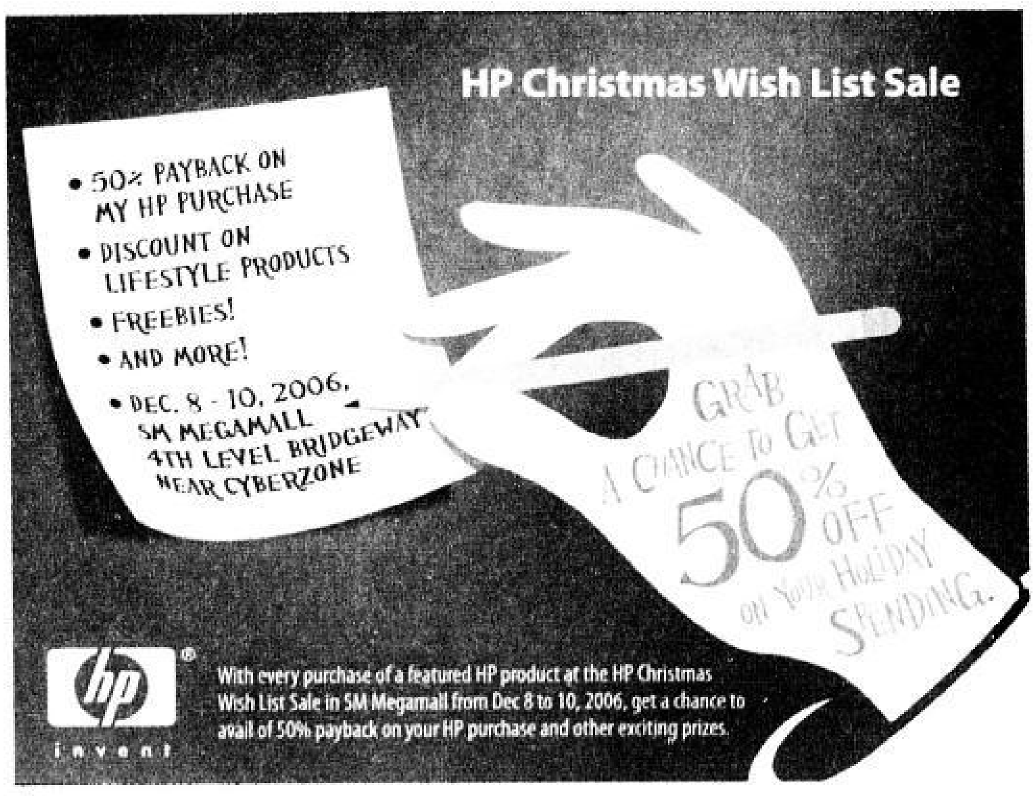
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HK Disneyland, here we come!

SLEEPING Beauty's castle bursts to life during fireworks.

From page C1

better if we had our families with us. You experience that many times in this line of work, but it rings truer when you're alone with your colleagues right in the din of Disney revelry.

Good fortune

Last week, I had the good fortune of visiting Hong Kong Disneyland once again—an entire weekend this time with my wife Vangie and daughters Mavi and Maxi in tow. The trip was short-noticed. We needed to rush the kids' passports and had to make special arrangements with their school. Mavi, 6, and Maxi, 4, were flushed with excitement, impatiently counting the days to the big day. The bicycle and go-kart they wanted for Christmas? They were, by unanimous decision, waived in favor of Disneyland.

The truth is, they were not the only ones overly excited about the whole thing. Without openly admitting it, I found myself preparing the handycam, recharging its batteries and buying an extra blank tape. I wiped out clean all the files on the camera and made sure Vangie would bring the office-issue camera for backup. I reckoned that we had at least 250 shots in our camera alone from its two memory sticks.

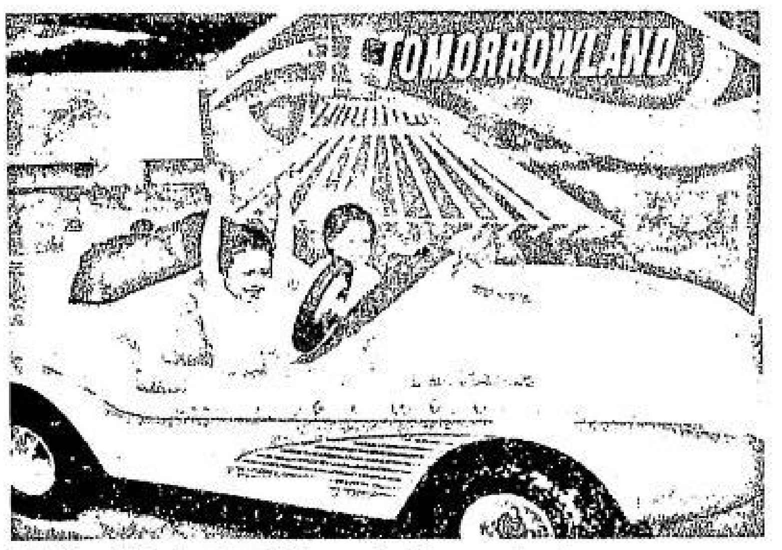
I took out our old reliable luggage and brushed its stains. The original clip locks were broken but I had a padlock instead to secure it. The brand name in front was also torn off from frequent use and an INQUIRER Badminton sticker took its place. I realized later that I should have at least bought a new one, as we got to parade our old luggage with Louis Vuitton trunks that the other Disney-bound family next to us was rolling out of the HK international airport.

Anyway, the first destination was the HK Disneyland Hotel. It was a vast mansion by the South China Sea, a Victorian-inspired building with high intricate ceilings adorned by outlandish chandeliers. It was one of the two hotels inside the HK Disneyland Resort, the other being the Art Deco-styled Disney Holleywood Hotel.

It was late in the afternoon when we got there. But we were lucky to have cool, cloudy weather that allowed the kids to run through the entire sprawl and get through the massive Mickey Mouse maze, while my wife and I enjoyed high-tea in the lobby café overlooking the hotel backyard.

There was no park visit yet in the day's itinerary, but dinner was promising: a buffet feast with Mickey, Minnie, Donald, Daisy, Goofy and Pluto at the Enchanted Garden.

I made sure the cameras were working and vowed to make all Disney encounters well-documented from this point on. You see, when you get to the park itself, you have to line up to take your turn for the photo-op with the characters, so this served as an added attraction for diners. True enough, the characters obliged, sauntering from table to table to have their pictures taken. Which provided a worthy undercard to tomorrow's main event.



MAVI and Maxi get into high gear in Tomorrowland.

STITCH works the crowd in the park's newest attraction.

Perfect day

It was also cloudy the following day but with temperatures close to that of early mornings in Manila. Perfect for the identical long-sleeved Disney shirts the four of us wore. I bought them during my first visit for our 2005 Christmas getup. And it sure turned heads as we hightailed it to this bright and cheery tinseltown.

A VIP tour guide was assigned to us for the day. Trained to deal with kids and speaking good English, she allowed us special entry to at least 12 attractions without getting in line. That cut a lot of waiting time and afforded us the convenience of hopping into the next show coming up in schedule. Of course, this kind of service cost an arm and a leg. But we were able to maximize the whole 10 hours we stayed in the park.

I also issued a couple of executive orders to the girls before we plunged into action: Don't ask to be carried when you get tired, and don't ask to buy things at the gift shops. By midday, both rules were broken, of course.

We arrived at around 11 a.m. and lingered till the shops closed on Main Street just before 9 p.m., long after the crowd had thinned out from the dazzling fireworks display at Sleeping Beauty's Castle.

Time sure flies when you're enjoying it. There was never a dull moment for us, from our opening salvo checking out Mickey's Philharmagic till we hit the fitting finale of Jungle River Cruise. The kids particularly loved Mickey's Philharmagic, as 3-D images darted off the screen. I found it hard to explain to them how we were able to even smell pastries and feel water splashes from behind our 3-D glasses.

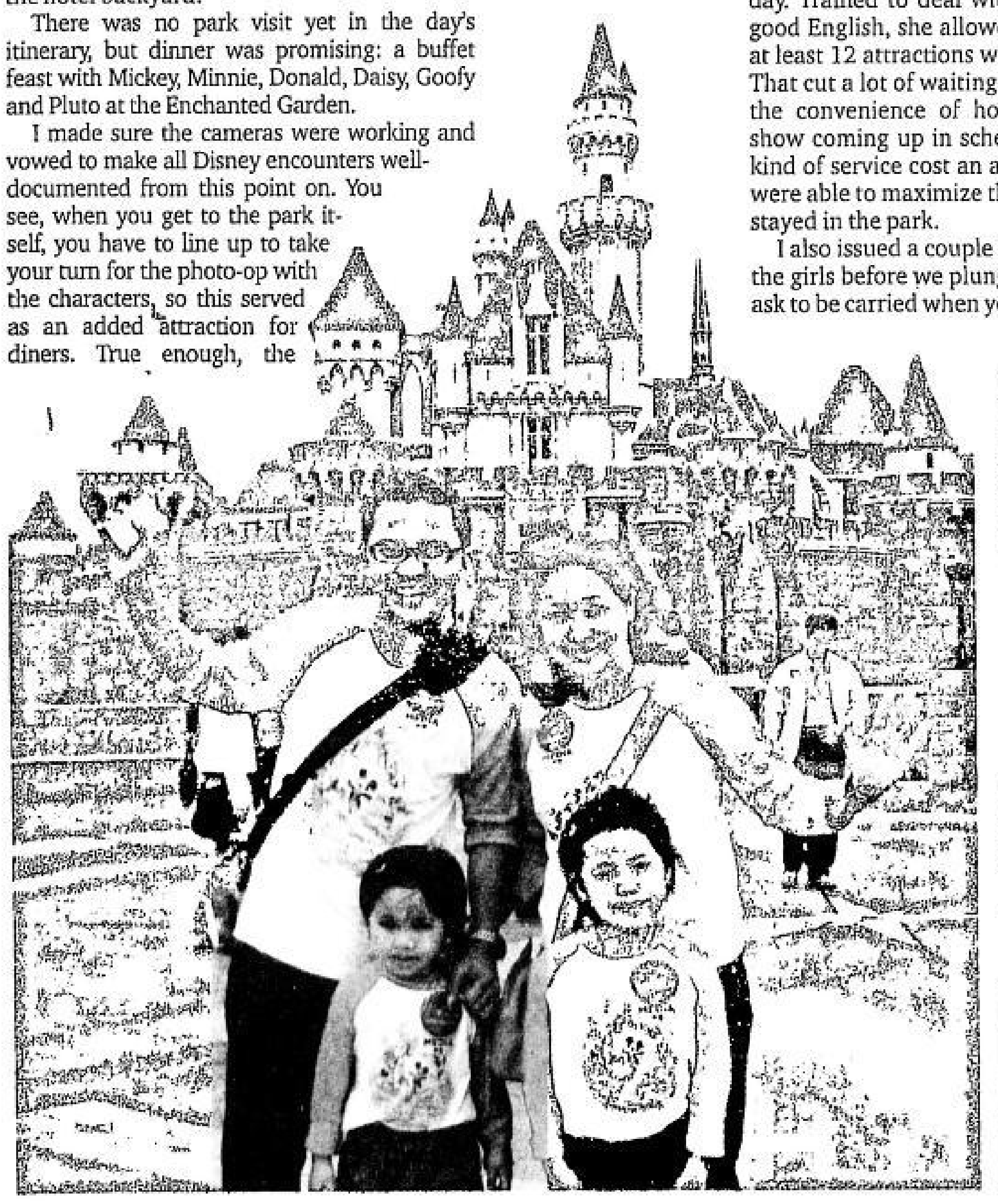
I rarely take rides even at theme parks back home. I hate heights and speed is not my cup of tea. But somebody had to hold the camera when we breezed through Dumbo the Flying Elephant and Orbitron. The high-speed roller coaster called Space Mountain, highlight of Tomorrowland—well, I conquered it from the front seat with Mavi.

Everything I passed up the first time I was there—Fantasyland Train Ride, Mad Hatter Tea Cups, The Golden Mickeys, Winnie the Pooh, new addition Stitch Encounter, Buzz Lightyear Astro Blazers and the Festival of the Lion King—I had no choice but to try this time. And for some reason, I enjoyed them every step of the way.

The trip's knockout punch was the Grand Disney on Parade. I missed it completely the first time around because I was lining up for hotdogs at a corner stand. But this time, we were up in front to see it ahead of everyone else.

The whole Disney trip had plenty of winning moments, I must say. But actually, being there with loved ones was a whole new championship experience altogether.

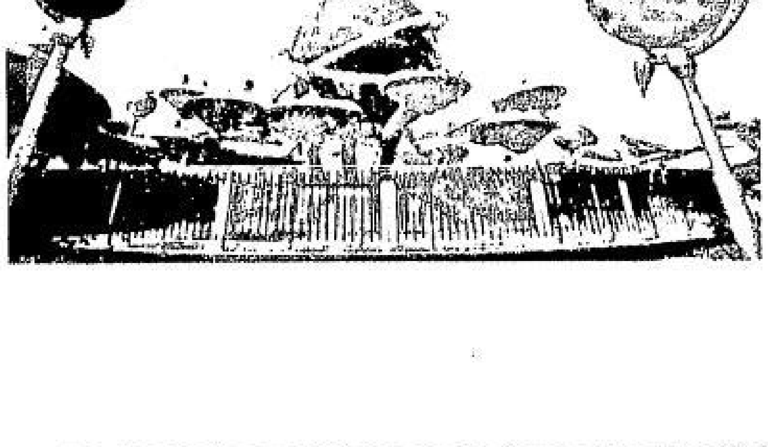
E-mail the author at mreyes@inquirer.com.ph



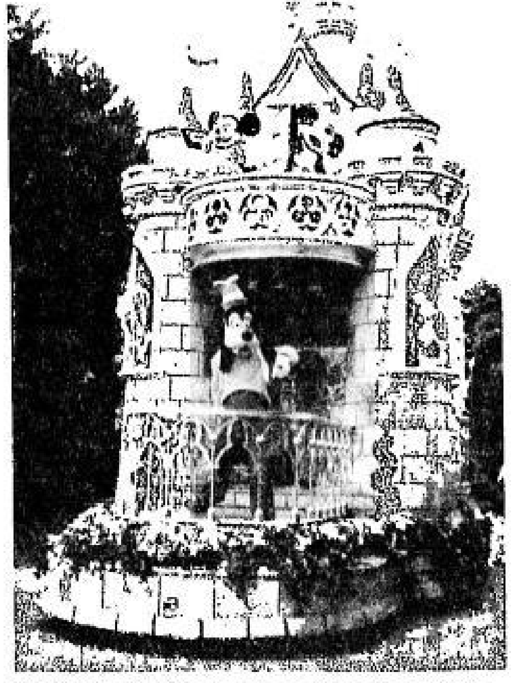
WHEN in Disneyland, dress the part! Marc, Vangie, Mavi and Maxi Reyes strike a pose in front of Disney landmark.

GOLDEN Mickey's show clicks with the young audience.

DONALD and Daisy preen by the giant gifts in Town Square.



THE VIEW from beneath the Orbitron



FLOATS with Disney characters aboard are paraded daily down on Main Street

GINGERBREAD house serves as centerpiece of the candy buffet at HK Disneyland Hotel.

Holiday magic

IF YOU LONG TO EXPERIENCE A different kind of Christmas and New Year celebration, better be where soft snow falls every night, where a giant Christmas tree is lighted with a sing-a-long program, and prancing and dancing reindeers and elves lead a magical parade with Santa Claus.

Yes, it's a magical Christmas at Hong Kong Disneyland!

Like a winter fairytale setting, the whole park is festooned with sparkling garlands, bows and wreaths. The highlight, however, is the radiant 60-ft Christmas tree located in Town Square, where you will be fascinated by the "Mickey's Sing-a-Long Tree Lighting" show every 6 p.m. Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse and their Disney friends (Goofy, Donald Duck, Daisy Duck, Pluto, Chip 'n' Dale) invite guests to join in the fun of singing "Jingle Bells," "Deck the Halls," and "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer."

Every night, one lucky family will be invited to join Mickey, Santa and the gang on stage to light the tree, which signals the start of gently falling snow and the ambient illumination of Main Street, USA.

This, while Santa makes his home in Santa's Corner at the Opera House, offering a magical encounter for guests eager to meet him up close.

On New Year's Eve, the park will be transformed into a giant dance floor with a 20-piece band and DJs spinning party tunes. Mickey and his pals will lead the countdown on stage at midnight while pyrotechnic display will illuminate the night sky.

Food treats

Eating should be part of the holiday celebrations. So check out the sweet aromas wafting from the Market House Bakery where chefs bake Christmas log cake, Turkey puff, Mickey gingerbread and biscuits.

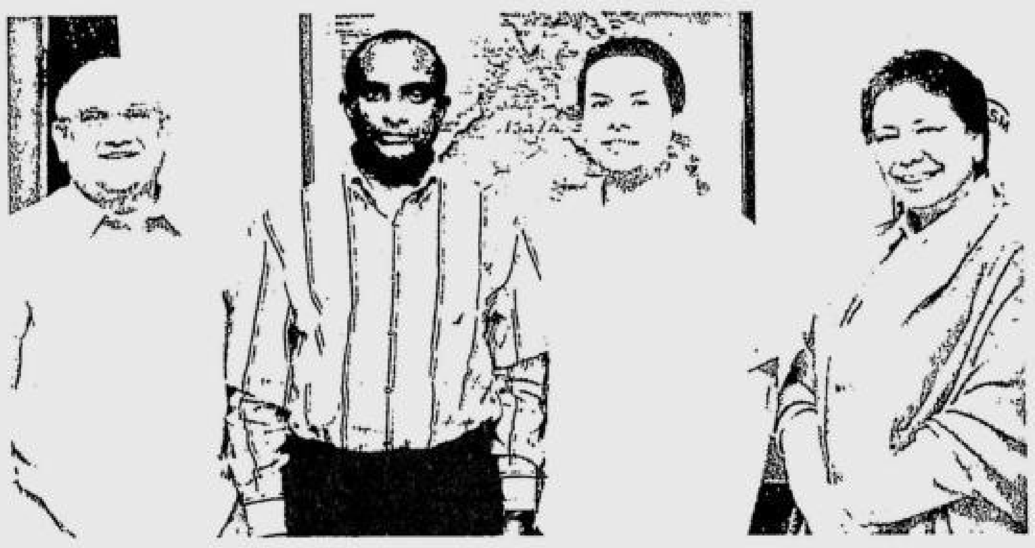
For a heartier meal, Corner Café has a three-course menu, starting off with a cream of butternut squash soup, followed by a traditional roasted turkey and shrimp fritter and served with vegetable rice, roasted veggies and pineapple salsa. A warm Christmas pudding with vanilla sauce ends the lunch and dinner experience. Priced at HK$108 per person.

Across the street at Plaza Inn, this Chinese restaurant takes on an eastern-inspired twist by offering eight succulent dishes. From "Joy to the World" (roasted turkey with dragon fruit salad) and "Glitter Christmas Night" (sautéed fresh prawns with orange sauce) to "Winter Snow" (braised veggies with crab meat) and "Angel Gospel" (teriyaki beef fillets with mixed mushrooms), this is a family meal fit for royalty. Priced at HK$185 per person.

Well, with all the holiday treats and entertainment for the whole family, the magic truly never ends in HK Disneyland! *Vangie Baga-Reyes*

TRAVELBRIEFS

TOURISM FAIR
The 1st North Philippines International Tourism fair was held recently at SM City Clark in cooperation with Regions 1, 2 and 3, and the Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR). It was organized by the National Association of Independent travel Agencies and co-sponsored by the Department of Tourism, Philippine Tourism Authority, Philippine Airlines, SM City, North Luzon Expressway, Casino Pilipino, Superferry. Naitas president Angel Ramos Bognot (fourth from left) is shown with: Teody Espallardo, Aurora Gov. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo, DOT Region 3 director Ronaldo Tiotiuco, Region 2 director Blessida Diwa, CAR director Purification Molintas and Baguio City Mayor Rey Bautista Jr.



DEPARTMENT of Tourism (DOT) Secretary Joseph Durano (second from right) recently met with Republic of Maldives minister of presidential affairs Mohammed Hussain (second from left) during the latter's courtesy call. Both discussed possible tourism bilateral relations and cooperation between the two island republics. Also in the picture are DOT Undersecretary for planning and promotions Eduardo Jarque Jr. and Dr. Mina T. Gabor, former Tourism Secretary and honorary consul to Maldives.

Europe at a bargain

Experience Christmas in Vienna and other European destinations through Austrian Airlines. Travelers can explore Austria's capital city and tour Swiss cities via air or rail for as low as US$2,640++ for 12 days.

With American Express Adventure International Tours Inc. (AMEX-AITI), the airline presents the Eastern European Travel Package for $1,890++ that covers Vienna, Prague and Budapest. Travelers can take the European East Rail Pass and tour two additional destinations in Poland and Slovakia. Austrian Airlines, with Star Alliance partner Asiana Airlines, can take travelers around the world at a discounted rate of only $1450++ on Economy. The packages and promos are available until April 30, 2007.

Call Austrian Airlines at 8920197 or AMEX-AITI at 8674888.

Sunday open house in Bataan property

Anvaya Cove in Morong, Bataan, held a Sunday Open House recently. Ayala Land Premier's first leisure development in Bataan gave more than 300 guests a preview of what the 320-hectare seaside community can offer. Ayala Land, the country's largest property developer, aims to create a summer sanctuary for both people and nature. Guests were briefed on the development's components such as Beach and Nature Club, and the planned communities The Cliffside, Mango Grove and Wood Park. Call 7287000 or visit www.anvayacove.com. Anvaya Cove has a marketing showroom at Greenbelt 2 Park (near Italiannis and Segafredo), Ayala Center, Makati City.

Negros Occ. tour

The Annual Cultural Tour of Negros Occidental (Actno) is scheduled 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Dec. 9 and 16. Fee is P600 per person. Registration is at Jara Laboratory and Blood Bank, corner Lacson-1st. Sts., Bacolod City, (034) 4346398. Ramon H. Hofileña will be the tour guide. Assisting are volunteers from Escalante City, Jara Laboratory and Blood Bank, and Negros Occidental Cultural and Sports Foundation. Flyers are available at Jara Lab.

Miles program has treat for online bookers

Skywards members will enjoy savings of 10 percent off when they book an Emirates reward ticket online before Feb. 28, 2007, on www.emirates.com. Providing the benefit of redeeming Miles from home or office, the online booking facility also enables travelers to check real-time flight status, select meal preferences, request visas, choose preferred payment and ticket delivery method, as well as customize their trip using a wide host of additional travel preference options.

Brian LaBelle, vice president of Skywards, said "this limited time offer allows members to fly further with their Miles, saving them up to 36,000 Miles in a single transaction. And with online booking, Skywards members are able to organize their travel details at their own convenience."

The offer is open to all Skywards members flying to Emirates' destinations and cannot be combined with any other ongoing reduced rewards offers. Skywards, the frequent flyer program of Emirates and Sri Lankan, offers three tiers of membershi—Blue, Silver and Gold—with each membership tier providing exclusive privileges. Gold and Silver members are entitled to wait-list priority for all classes of travel, priority check-in and airport lounge access. Members earn Skywards Miles, one Skywards Mile for every mile they fly on Emirates, Sri Lankan or partner airlines, or when they use the programme's designated hotels, car rentals, financial, leisure and lifestyle partners.

Skywards Miles can be redeemed for a wide range of rewards, including free tickets on Emirates or Sri Lankan and other Skywards partner airlines, flight upgrades, hotel accommodation, excursions and exclusive shopping.

Dumi't Mikrobyong Madikit, Tanggal sa Isang Pahid!
NEW!
Mr Muscle
FLOOR CLEANER
NEW
Mr Muscle®
THE SCIENCE OF TOUGH CLEANING®
FLOOR CLEANER
Kills up to 99.9% of germs even when diluted!
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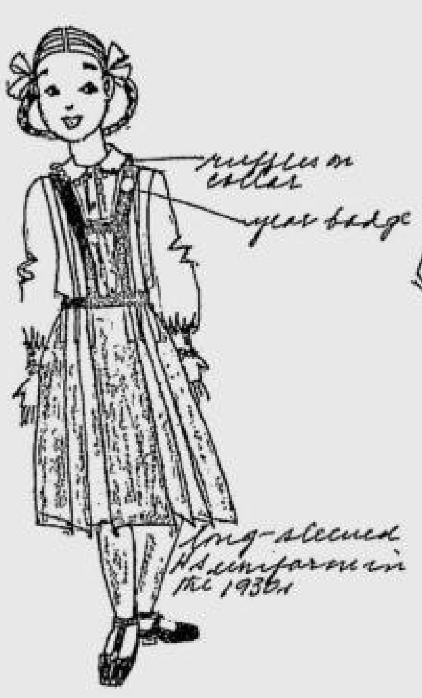
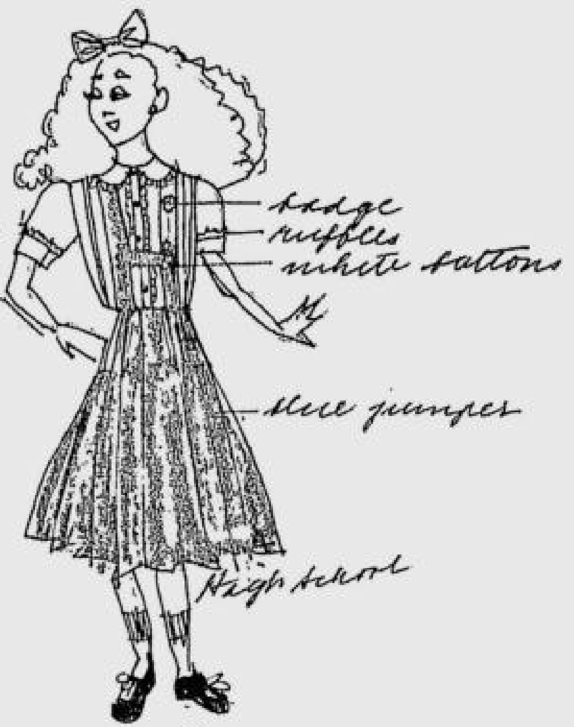
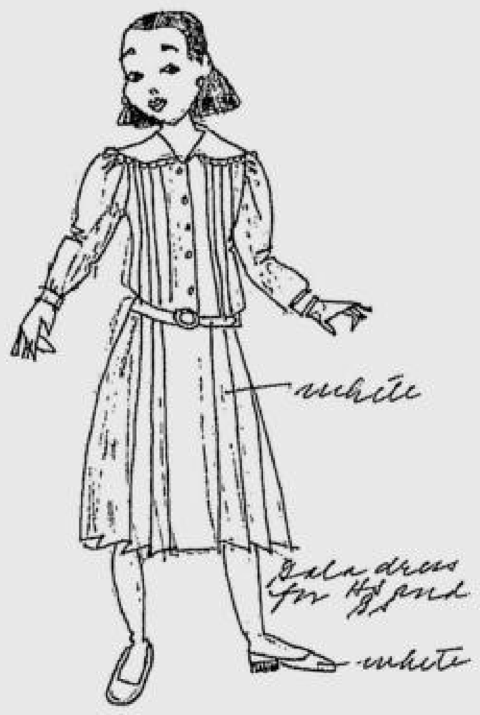
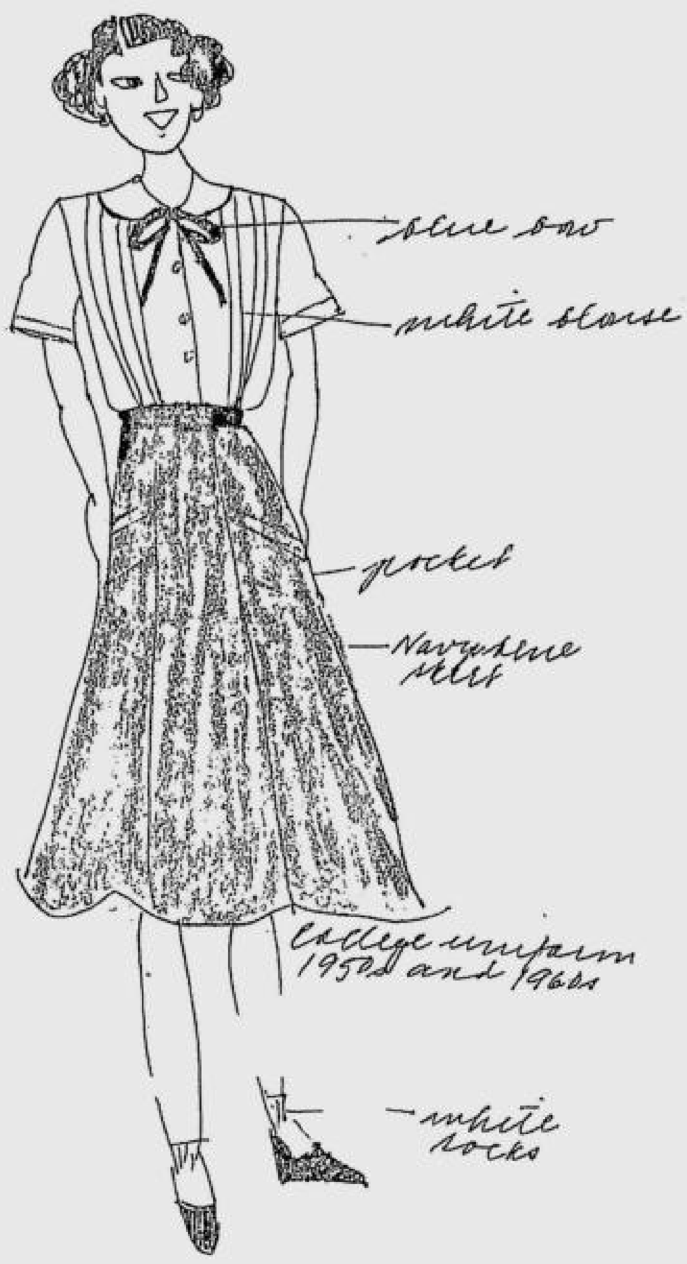
A FAMILY COMPANY

Sa **Mr. Muscle Floor Cleaner**, tanggal ang matitinding dumi, pati 99.9% ng germs at mikrobyo! No need to rinse! Mas mabilis, mas malinis sa new **Mr. Muscle Floor Cleaner**.


ruffles on collar
year badge
long-sleeved HS uniform in the 1930s


badge
ruffles
white buttons
blue jumper
High school


white
Gala dress for HS and BS
white


blue bow
white blouse
pocket
Navy blue skirt
College uniform 1950s and 1960s
white socks

The way they wore

Sketches and text
by Larry Leviste

"GERMAN UTILITARIAN jumper with white catholic ruffles"—the St. Scholastica's College uniform was my first fashion inspiration.

Today I'm attending the book launch of "Daughters True, 100 Years of Scholastican Education" and the opening of the St. Scholastica Archive Museum in the campus.

Two months ago Neni Sta. Romana and I spoke on the phone. After a brief discussion about this book, Neni tasked me to contribute illustrations of the St. Scholastica uniform as it has evolved from the '30s to the present. I was thrilled at the idea, and instantly accepted the offer. If anything, my godmother, Sister Angelica Leviste, College president and former Mother Prioress of St. Scho, would have approved.

What no one knew until now is that it was this school uniform that first got me interested in fashion design.

My first sketches were of my sister Gina in navy and white grade-school separates. Coco Chanel loved this look—yes, the "German navy utilitarian jumper with white catholic ruffles." It was smart tailoring yet forever young in appearance. That's why the design has endured and only changed in details with modern norms and forms.

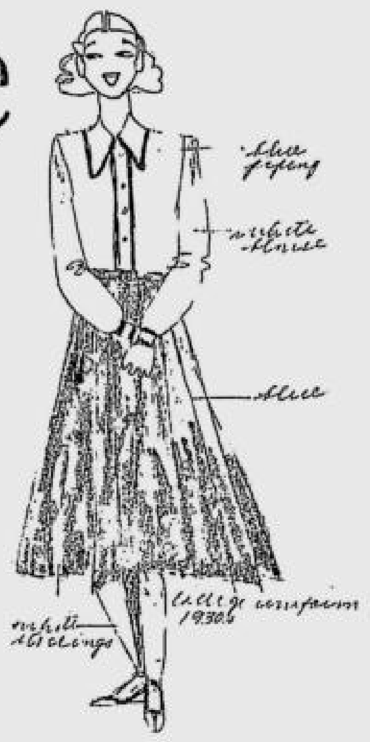
My mom pointed out that her mother, Carmen de Santos Pineda, went to high school in St. Scho, graduating in 1930. A flapper jumper in light blue with a long-sleeved white blouse was the silhouette then. Then in the '40s, it became the skirt and blouse as we know the uniform today.

The piping on the collar and string bow bowed out in the next decade. Hemline length moved ever upwards, peaking at miniskirt-short in the '70s. How can I forget Boots and Buena, the *colegiala* sisters of designer Chito Vijandre? They were so hip and sexy dressed this way.

No one knew until now that St. Scholastica's school uniform was what got me interested in fashion design

It all began when we moved to a brand-new house at the back of St. Scholastica. It was 1962 and I was finishing grade school at La Salle Taft. My parents, who were teaching at St. Scho, planned that all my six younger sisters should be enrolled there, since it would only take a few minutes' walk to the school's Singalong gate.

Of course, we were chauffeured in a Volkswagen Combi, the family van of choice. My sisters were my living dolls, a string of beauties always eager to join my beauty pageant or fashion parades. Every morning this tiny army of my sisters—Gina, Mael, Mean, Berry, Onie and Cissy—wore the slightly starched peter pan-collared blouse with that ingenious cord that tied at the waist to control the volume as you tucked into these deep-pleated and pocketed skirts in serge blue.

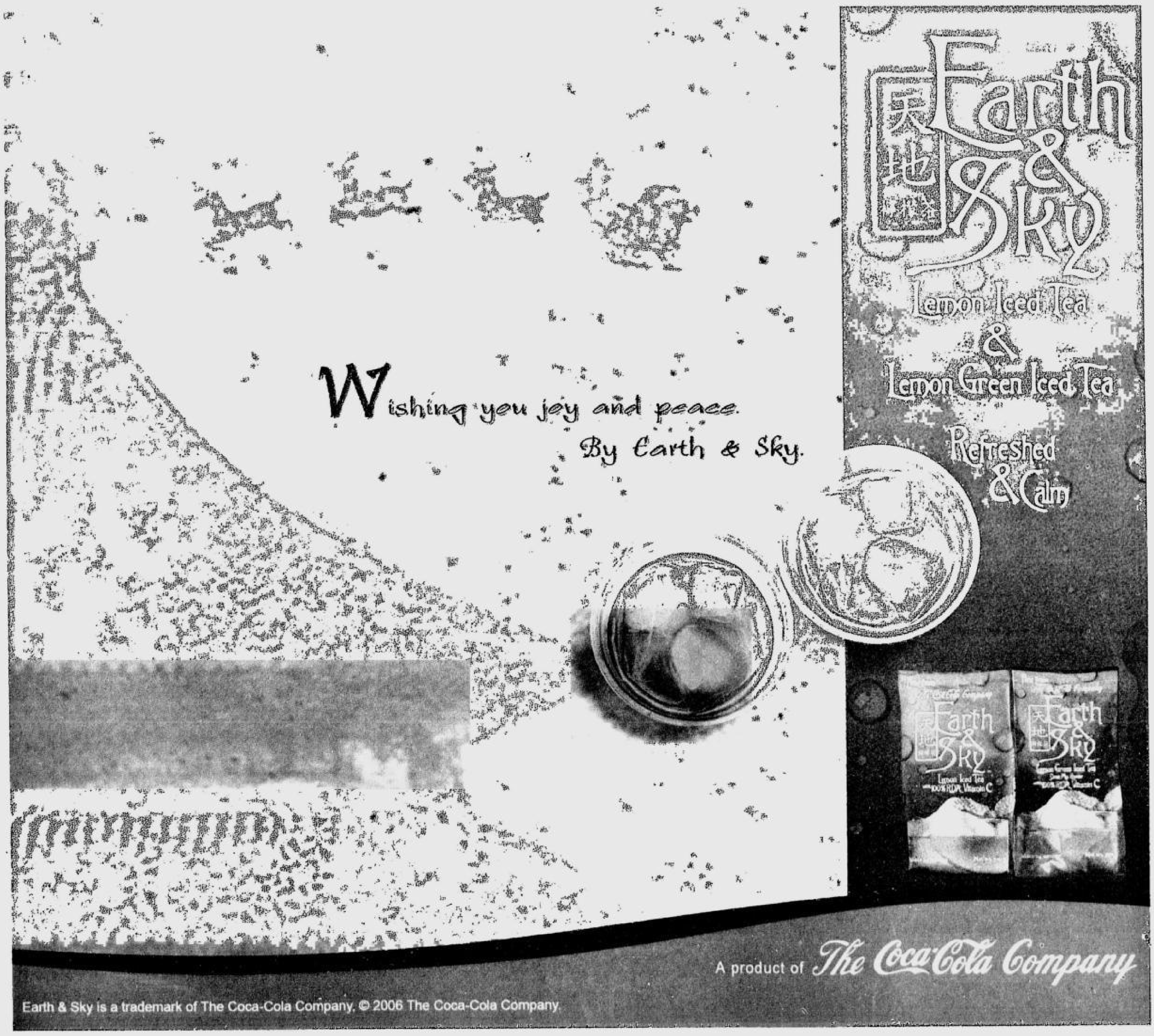

blue piping
white blouse
blue
College uniform 1930s
white stockings

Patent black shoes by Greggs were worn with folded white socks. Their signature accessory was the animated tin lunch box.

I drew them, photographed them and loved them. They were my house models, my original muses who always amused the maids and strangers I would take hostage as my audience.

So that scorching summer, I learned to like drama as St. Scho gals Maan Hontiveros, Mitch Valdez, Tess Prats and Sol Oca came into my fashion-focused life. I studied these defiant forerunners of the empowered Pinay and saw the possibilities. Next-door neighbors Pielle and Donna Leda introduced me to Anita Dimalanta, whose sister Deling was studying fashion design at Slim's. My heart was decided I wanted to be a fashion designer after high school. That was the start of my incredible journey.

Now at midlife, when one is supposed to embrace where he's at, I find myself in a deja vu moment. It seems like only yesterday that I was trying to sketch a uniform and trailblazing the future of ready-to-wear!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Sunday LIFESTYLE

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Inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

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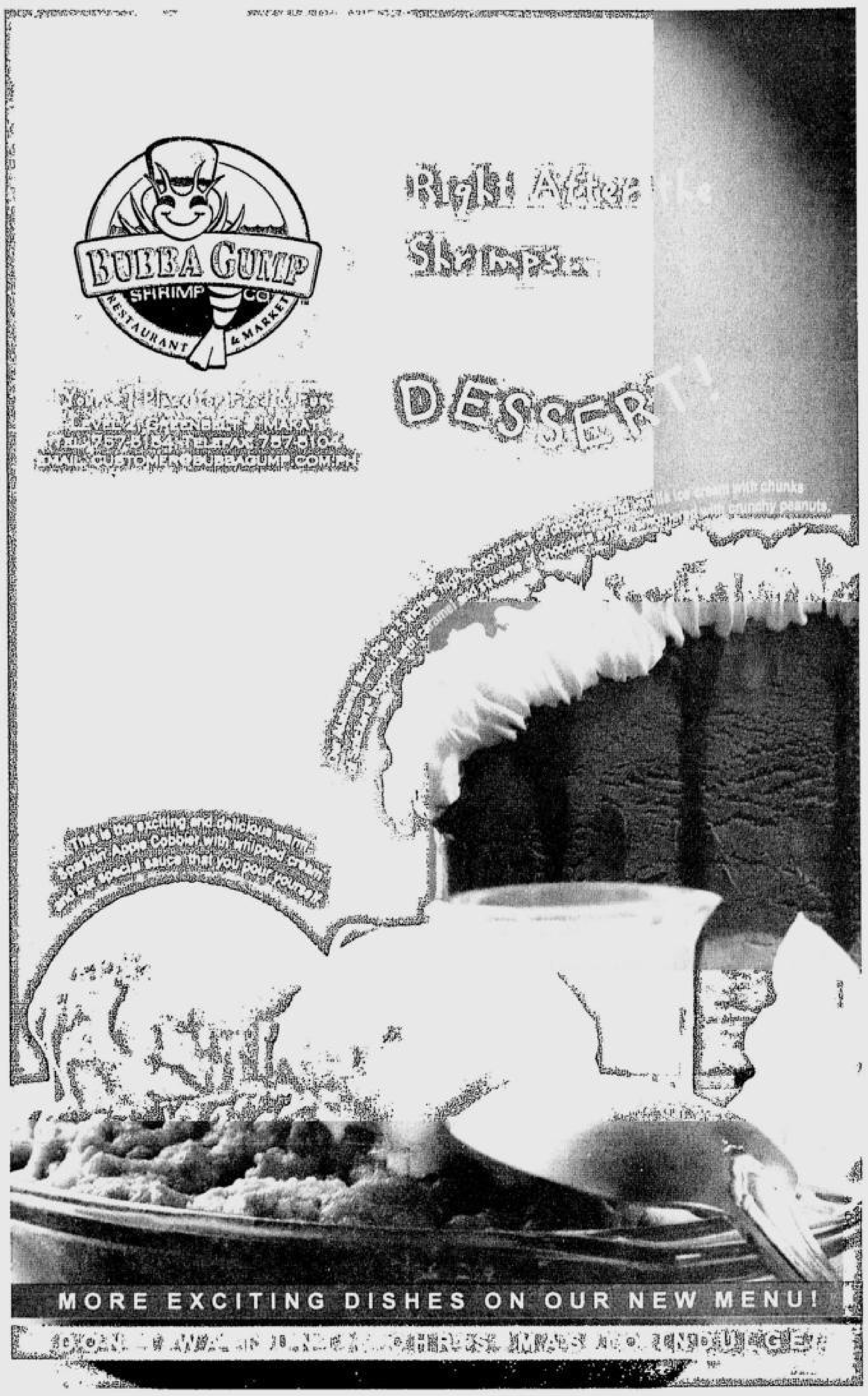
AVAILABLE AT LEADING SUPERMARKETS NATIONWIDE

at HOME

Weekends in the woodlands

- **How to hold a garage sale:** Dos and don'ts to observe /D3
- **Putting on the Ritz at home:** Where to buy hotel-quality beddings and dinnerware /D4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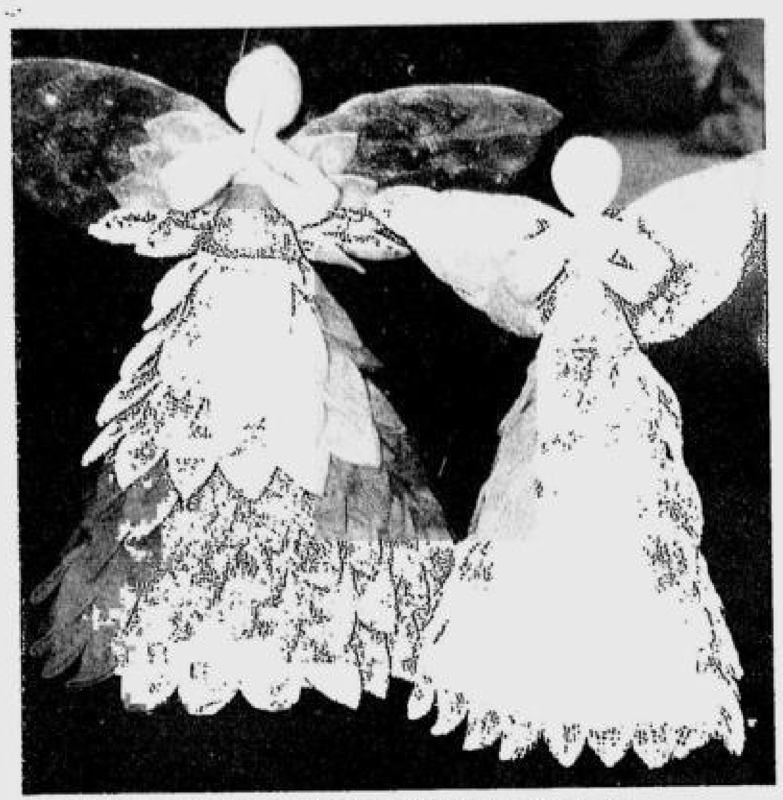
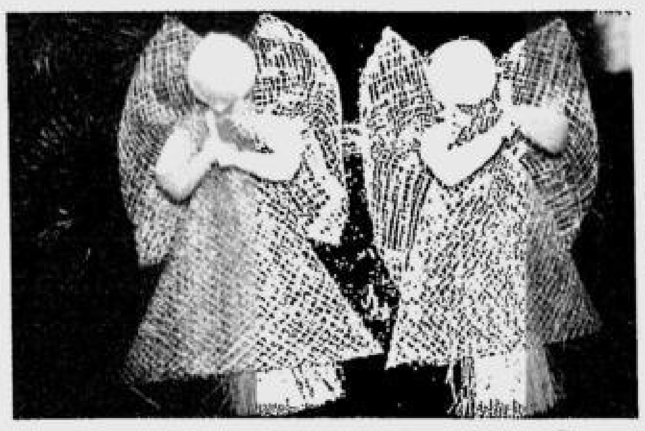
Right After the Shrimps...
DESSERT!
This is the exciting and delicious warm Sparkling Apple Cobbler with whipped cream and our special sauce that you pour yourself!
... ice cream with chunks ... crunchy peanuts.
MORE EXCITING DISHES ON OUR NEW MENU!



HARK the angels sing in colorful *sinamay* dress and wings

PINK and orange flat *abaca* angels with flared skirts



A GOLD *sinamay* dress adorn this Christmas angel handmade from *abaca* fiber

Pinoy touches for Xmas

KULTURA FILIPINO TRANSFORMS best-loved traditional holiday symbols like wreaths, angels, trees and Santa Claus into world-class décor with Pinoy touches.

Crafted by Filipino artisans, they are fashioned from local materials. Wreaths are made from red, green and natural *abaca* fibers woven into ropes and braids.

Abaca tabletop trees are sprinkled with snow and treetop angels have delicate *sinamay* robes and wings.

Santa is made of polyres in antique or candy finishes, handcrafted and hand-painted in Binangonan, Rizal.

The holiday décor collection is available at all Kultura Filipino outlets at SM Makati, SM Megamall, Mall of Asia, and The Block at SM City North Edsa.

Get A Holiday Treat from Wow! Magic Sing

When buying a WOW! videoke microphone this holiday season, you're not only buying the best selling magic sing, but you'll also get a chance of winning an all-expense paid vacation courtesy of WOW! Country Holiday Tour. This bonus promo is a value-added treat to the on going WOW! SingKatutak na Pamasko Promo wherein, P1.5 million in cash will be given away.

Excited at the thought of an all-expense paid vacation? If the answer is yes, then all you have to do is cut out the WOW! bonus raffle portion in leading newspapers. This will serve as your official raffle coupon. Fill in the details and present it when purchasing any of the WOW! magic sing products: WOW! Mabuhay (ED8K model), WOW! Fiesta (ED9K model) or WOW! Papuri (ED7K model), WOW! Duet Mic or any WOW! Song Chip.

The winners can choose their vacation destinations; one (1) of the three (3) WOW! Country Holiday Tour packages. The 3 destinations choices are: Taygaytay – Manila Escapade, Tarsy Tour – Bohol, and Boracay Getaway. Included in each package tour are: two (2) round trip tickets, 3 days – 2 nights standard hotel accommodation, plus P10,000 pocket money.

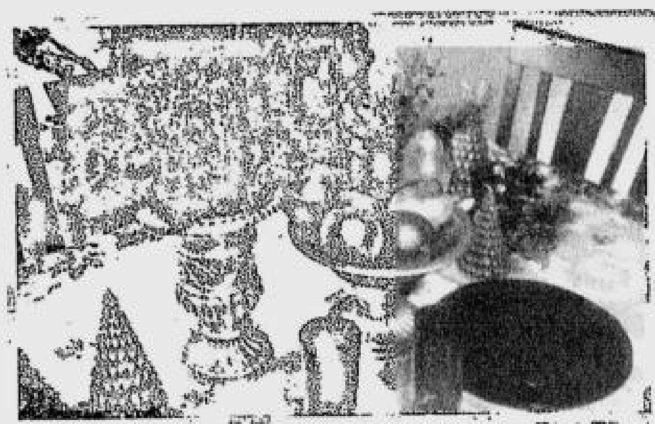
Promo runs from November 12, 2006 to January 31, 2007. Deadline for submission of entries is on January 31, 2007. Draw date will be held on February 14, 2007.

WOW! magic sing products are available at all branches of Odyssey, Astrovision, Automatic Center, Abenson, Western, Avid Surfer and other leading appliance, music & video stores nationwide.

WOW! magic sing is exclusively distributed by In-A-Jiffy Enterprises / G2K Corporation. For more information, please call: (02) 3621566 / 3619450 local 835 – 836 or 7247079 / 7225127.

ADVT

The colors of Christmas



TOP: Gold, green and red luxe table setting with a centerpiece of red berries, apples and pears over golden vases accented with ruby dinnerware and green Christmas tree candles; Below: Icy blue, white crystals and chrome highlight this dazzling Christmas setup

BRING CHRISTMAS TO YOUR HOME WITH a play of colors and themes from Our Home, the lifestyle store where one can get the great designs at great prices.

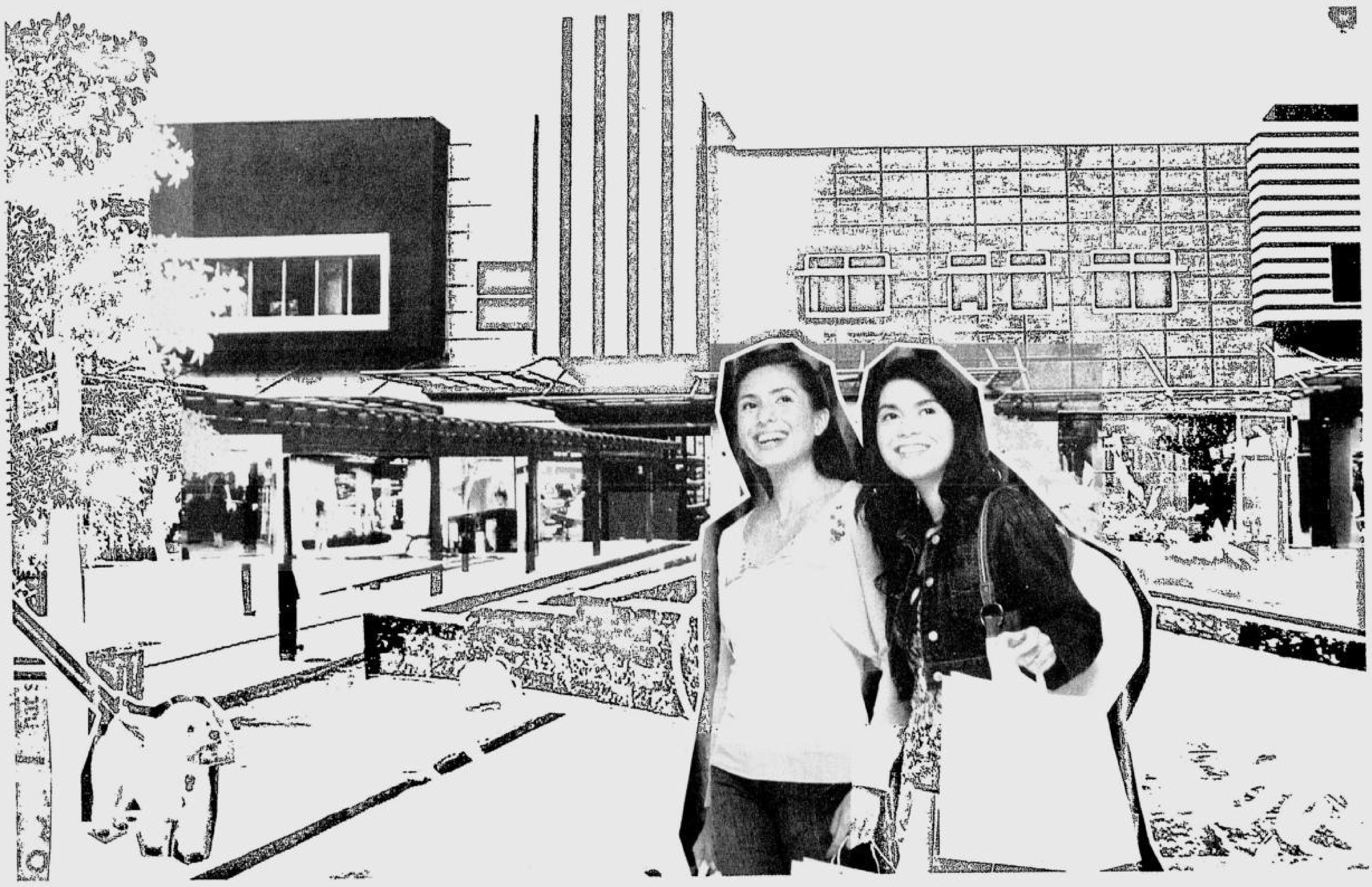
Ranging from traditional red and green to icy snow white and blue to opulent metallic shades, the colors of Christmas can transform your home into an elegant holiday showcase. More than that, they bring in the season's festive spirit into your home.

Red and green bring in Christmas cheer in a big way—think holly and mistletoe, wreaths and trees, candy canes and Santa images. Deeper shades of these colors, however, can make dramatic table settings with beaded fruits, silk flowers and holly berries as centerpieces. Or make your season's statement by arranging Christmas tree candles with rich red and green fabrics like velvet, silk, satin.

Icy white and blue are the colors of snowflakes creating a blanket of snow beneath a dazzling blue sky. Transform your room into a winter wonderland with cool centerpieces—snow white candles, chrome balls and beaded blue ornaments on a glass tray.

Metallic shades are perfect for dazzling holiday settings. Rich golden tree trimmings, copper pre-lite Christmas trees and opulent ornaments bring a touch of holiday elegance to one's home.

The collection is available at all Our Home stores at SM Megamall, The Block at SM City North-EDSA, SM City Fairview, SM Southmall and the Mall of Asia. It also has an outlet at V-Mall in Ortigas, as well as in SM's provincial supermalls in Bacoor, Sta. Rosa, Pampanga, Clark, Lucena, Baguio, Marilao, Dasmariñas and Batangas in Luzon, and Iloilo and Cagayan de Oro in the Vizmin area.



A MONEY belt helps keep your cash safe while a price list clipboard helps you remember how much each item costs.

Learn some dos and don'ts from a professional organizer before embarking on this project

PUT UP your garage sale sign three or more days in advance. Indicate date/day, place and time.

So you're holding a garage sale?

By Kathleen Ong
Contributor

HAVING A GARAGE SALE takes a lot of work. When a client would talk about having one, I usually ask, "Are you sure? It's quicker and easier to just donate the items and be done with it."

But for those bent on holding one, here are some tips:

- Plan when and how to have the garage sale.
- Go through your house and find saleable things or items in good condition that you're tired of.
- Sort and price everything accordingly.
- Be present during the sale and haggle with people.
- Pack up the leftovers.
- Count money earned and hope it compensates for all the work.

The project takes a lot of time and effort.

A lot of details go into having a garage sale so it's important to keep things simple.

Dos and don'ts

On pricing:

1. Price by category (all pants P150, all T-shirts P50, all books P10). This is great for items you have a lot of, like clothes, books, compact discs or digital video discs. Pricing these items individually will not only drive you nuts but use up a lot of your time. Doing it *ukay-ukay* style can save you a lot of trouble.

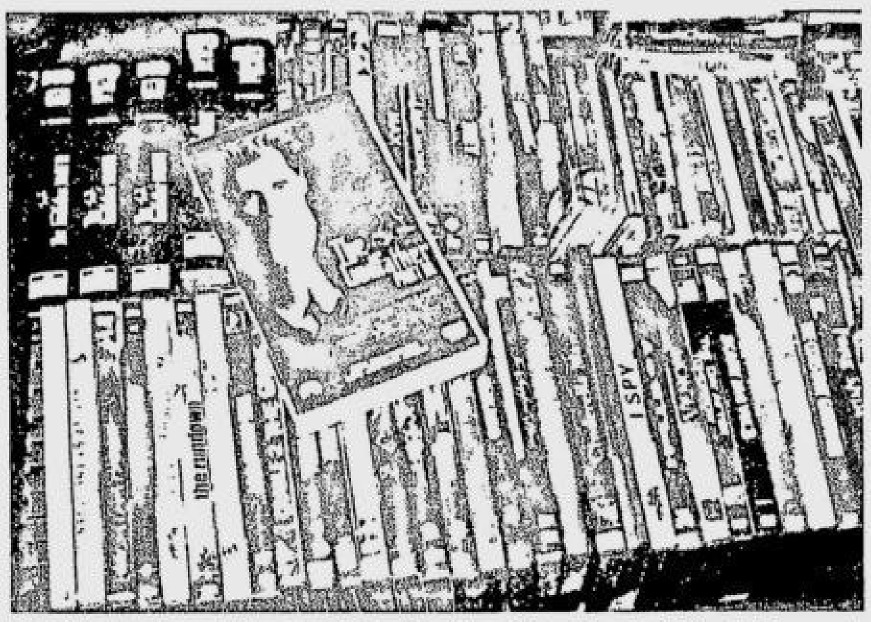
2. Decide on different price ranges and group items into those price categories (everything on this box, P100, or all items on this table, P20). You can also use colored stickers and have a color-coded price list posted on the wall (all red-tagged items, P150; all green-tagged items, P80).

I would advise using the coded stickers for appliances or a few special-priced items.

- Don't complicate the pricing. Stay with numbers that will make it easy to give change to. You don't want to confuse yourself or the buyer.
- Keep prices garage-sale friendly. Think about your market. If you decide you can do without something, let it go. You don't want your efforts wasted and have those things still at the end of the day.
- Check out store prices for items that have never been used. You don't want to overprice or undercharge an item. The goal is to be able to haggle with both parties ending up happy.

On setting up

- Put up your Garage Sale sign three or more days in advance. If possible, put up signs on main streets, indicating date/day, place and time.
- Clean your merchandise and make it presentable. Avoid selling items that are cracked, stained or in poor condition.
- Set up tables or racks for displaying items (boxes or baskets for clothes, a newspaper-lined floor for shoes).
- Prepare plastic bags for buyers.
- Set up your items by category or by price.



PRICE by category (all pants P150, all T-shirts P50, all books P10). This is great for items you have a lot of, like clothes, books, CDs or DVDs.

- Have enough space so people can look at things comfortably.
- Have money for change.
- Use a belt bag for keeping money.
- Have a list of sold items.

Others:

- If you don't have enough items to sell, have another friend or relative join you. Set a deadline. You don't want to wait forever for people.
- If you don't have the energy for the garage sale, "hire" your relatives or friends, giving them a percentage of the profit.
- Put items in a plastic bag after the buyer has paid. It's easy to get confused with all the commotion.
- Decide in advance where leftovers will go. You can donate them to charity or the Salvation Army (1414 Leon Guinto St., Ermita, Manila. Open 8 a.m.-5 p.m., weekdays).

If you do not care for a garage sale, take unwanted items to people who buy secondhand things (this is usually by appointment and the merchandise has to be worth their while). Many secondhand shops are on Evangelista, Makati.

Do have a pleasant time and do not be so uptight during the garage sale. It can be a fun experience for both seller and buyer.

(www.rippleeffectorganizing.com)

Food and gift fair ends Dec. 20

A PRE-CHRISTMAS FOOD AND GIFT FAIR IS ongoing until Dec. 20 at the Edsa Garden House, Manila Seedling Bank Environment Center, Quezon Ave. cor. Edsa, Quezon City.

Over 150 booths are selling delicacies, fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, poultry, seafood, preserved and processed foods, *tapas*, *tocinos*, cakes and pastries, juices, wines, teas, oils, vinegars, dairy and poultry products, healthy organic foods, etc.

Livelihood training lectures, cooking demonstrations and on-the-spot games, contests and raffles, food samplings and tastings are being held daily for free on a first-come, first-served basis. Covered in the seminars are *morcon*, ham-making, chicken galantine cooking, Dec. 3; jelly variations, Dec. 8; *siopao*, *empanada*, *taho*-making, Dec. 9; spicy *dilis*, fish *quikiam*, Spanish sardines-making, Dec. 10; fish balls, rice variations, Dec. 15; cooking with herbs, Dec. 16; and powdered *salabat* and kimchi-making, Dec. 17. The fair is open 8 a.m.-6 p.m. daily.

Healer of sick trees

Dr. Isidro R. Esteban, a tree surgeon and forestry consultant, will provide a one-of-a-kind service through the Manila Seedling Bank Foundation Inc. (MSBFI) in Quezon City. A forestry graduate, Esteban specializes in curing tree ailments, particularly those afflicting centuries-old historical trees.

The MSBFI also has tree-pruning, seed planting, and other services.

It has indigenous trees available for propagation: *bagras*, *tindalo*, *molave*, *narra*, *balitbitan*, *palo santo*, *kamagong*, *banaba*, Palawan cherry, African tulip and *botong*. Next year, Bitaog-Palomaria, red *lauan*, *ipil*, *pili*, *molave narra*, *tindalo*, *kamagong*, *dao* and *kupang* will be available.

Visit the MBSFI at Quezon Avenue Extension corner E. de los Santos Ave., Quezon City. Call 9247001/02 or 9240166 or email qualitytrees@msbfi.com or visit www.msbfi.com.

Toys for young and old

FIND THE RIGHT GIFT FOR KIDS AND KIDS-at-heart at Toys "R" Us.

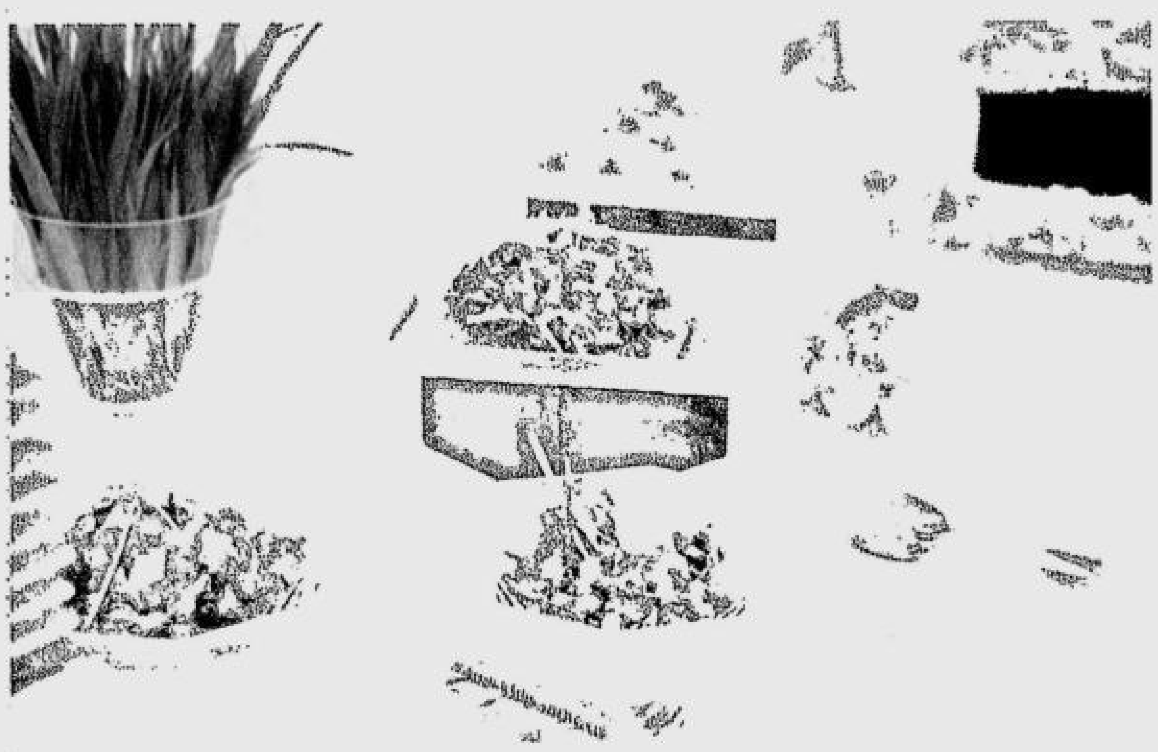
Located at the 4/L, Robinsons Galleria; lower ground floor, Robinsons Metro East and ground floor, Robinsons Place Lipa, the store offers for babies and toddlers potty trainers, rattles and teethers; kiddie vehicles, activity toys plus Toys "R" Us exclusives such as Dr. Sam's medical kits, Bruin stroller and pram toys, 3-in-1 Lil Artist learning easel and Kolcraft umbrella stroller, among others.

Girls can have items from Dream Dazzlers, Animal Alley, Fast Lane, Just Like Home, as well as an assortment of licensed brands.

Techie and educational toys include Lego, Imaginarium blocks, Junior PDA, Nintendo DS games, Gameboy Advance SP, TV games and Playstation 3.

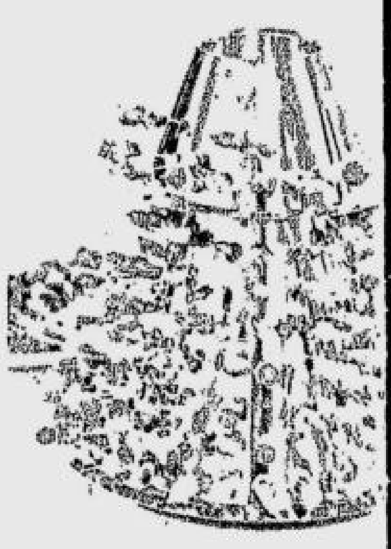
For families there are Pavilion games, Uno Stacko and Cards, Tabletop soccer game, board games and more.

The active and sports-minded may like Keep Fit Hoop, badminton sets, Hop Along Pony and Soccer Game sets.



SIMPLE glass plates in assorted shapes

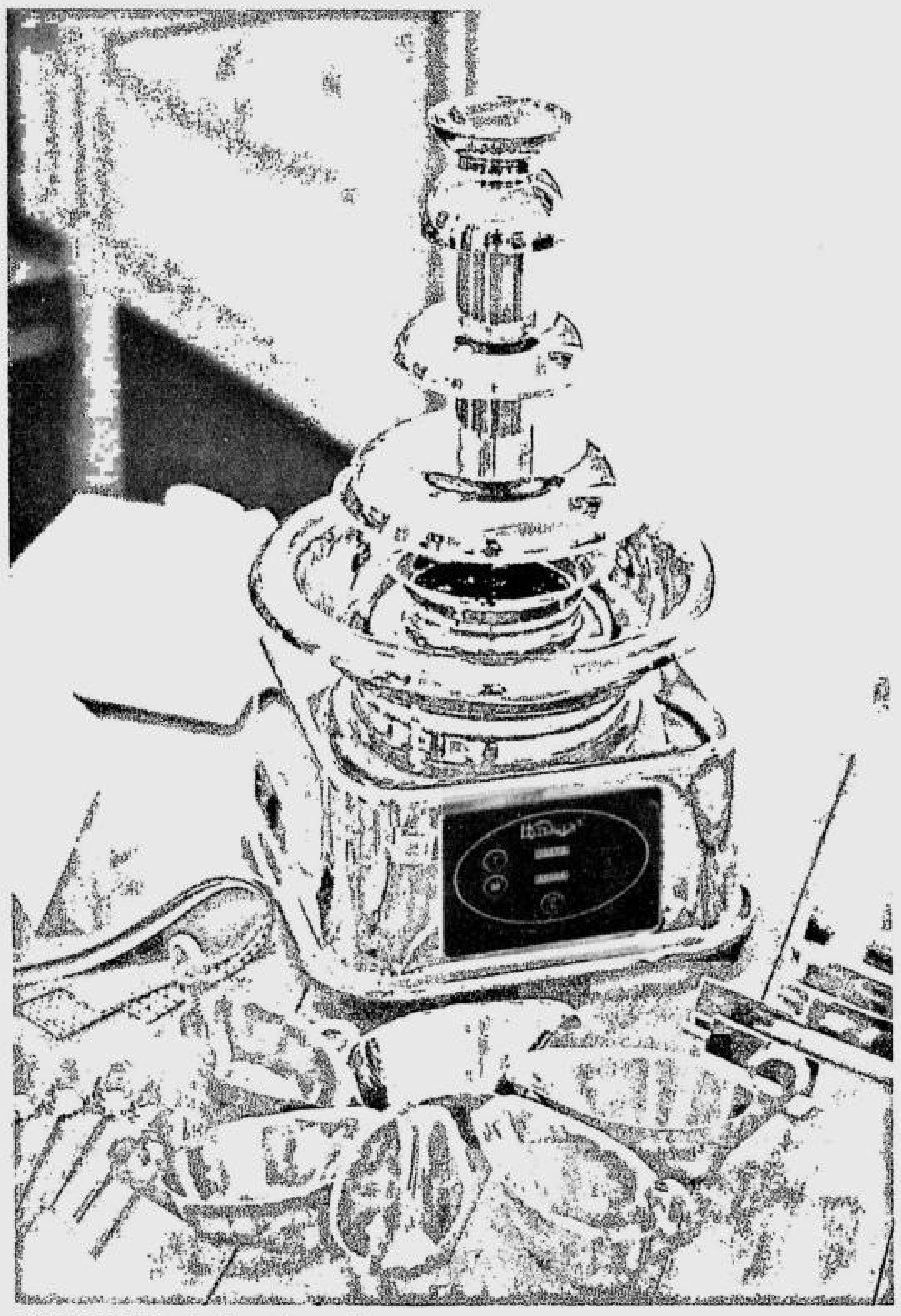
SHINY cream and sugar servers



STAINLESS steel centerpiece for s

Hotel comforts at home

Rustan's introduces a 'hotel line' consisting of high-grade items for the kitchen, dining area, bedroom and bathroom



CHOCOLATE fondue fountain machine

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina

YOU CAN NOW EXPERIENCE a semblance of hotel living—from dining with immaculate white plates to wrapping yourself in thick, soft terrycloth robes—without spending a fortune and leaving the comforts of home.

Rustan's makes this possible with the recent introduction of its "hotel line" consisting of high-grade items for the kitchen, dining area, bedroom and bathroom. The line, which includes stainless steel chocolate fondue fountains and serving trays, is initially available at its Makati and Shangri-La Plaza branches.

As the collection's name implies, each item is designed and produced to meet the stringent standards of hotels, restaurants and other professional establishments. Thus, apart from catering to the needs of the general public, the line is primarily aimed at satisfying the "emergency" requirements of nearby hotels.

Rustan's gets most of its flatware from WMF, a renowned German company specializing in hotel and restaurant utensils. For its bed and bath line, it has tapped no less than the Shanghai-based supplier of the Ritz-Carlton hotel chain.

"These items are really meant for hotel use," said Frieda Lim, vice president of Rustan's Home. "They're no-frills and more durable than the more expensive brands because they're made of high-grade materials."

The store's chafing dishes and various stainless steel containers, for example, are shinier, sturdier and more solid than the ones caterers normally use, she added.

Homemakers now have a chic but inexpensive alternative whenever they throw "spur-of-the-moment" parties. Rustan's hotel line of ceramic and porcelain dinnerware can withstand the rigors of constant use as well as careless maids better than the more expensive brands, said Lim.

"They can now stop worrying and start joining the party," she added. "These plates are perfect for informal parties and weekend get-togethers. Unlike more expensive brands, they're not hard on the pocket should they break."

Apart from housewives and working mothers, the products are also designed to appeal to a broad range of customers, which include newlyweds and swinging singles with limited time and budgets.

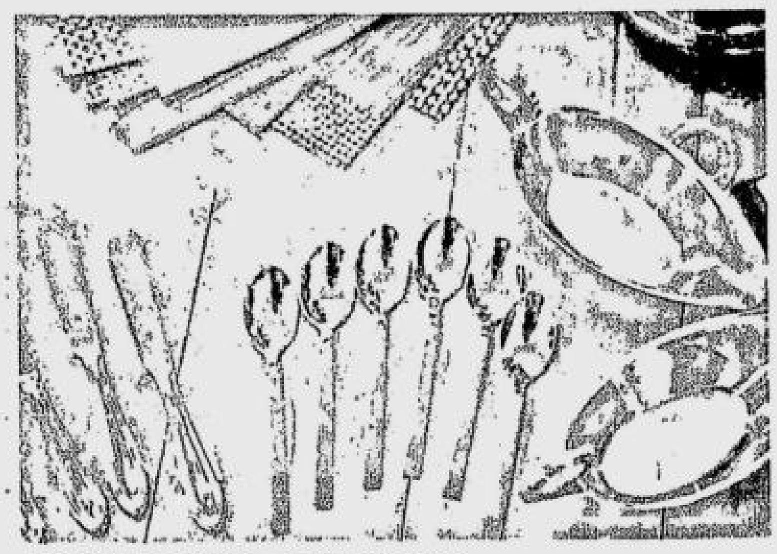
Durability aside, said Lim, today's consumers prefer clean, simple and white plates to elaborate and colorful ones. And should they want to switch from Zen to shabby chic, they can do so by simply adding a couple of irregular and colored pieces into the mix.

"The *terno* (matching) look is out," said Lim. "It's really up to the host to mix it up. Dining at home is supposed to be a relaxed and casual experience."

In Rustan's book, the same experience extends to the bedroom and bathroom. And with thick, fluffy towels and bathrobes just a swipe of the credit card away, people can now cease and desist the seemingly widespread practice of swiping such coveted items whenever they check out of a hotel.

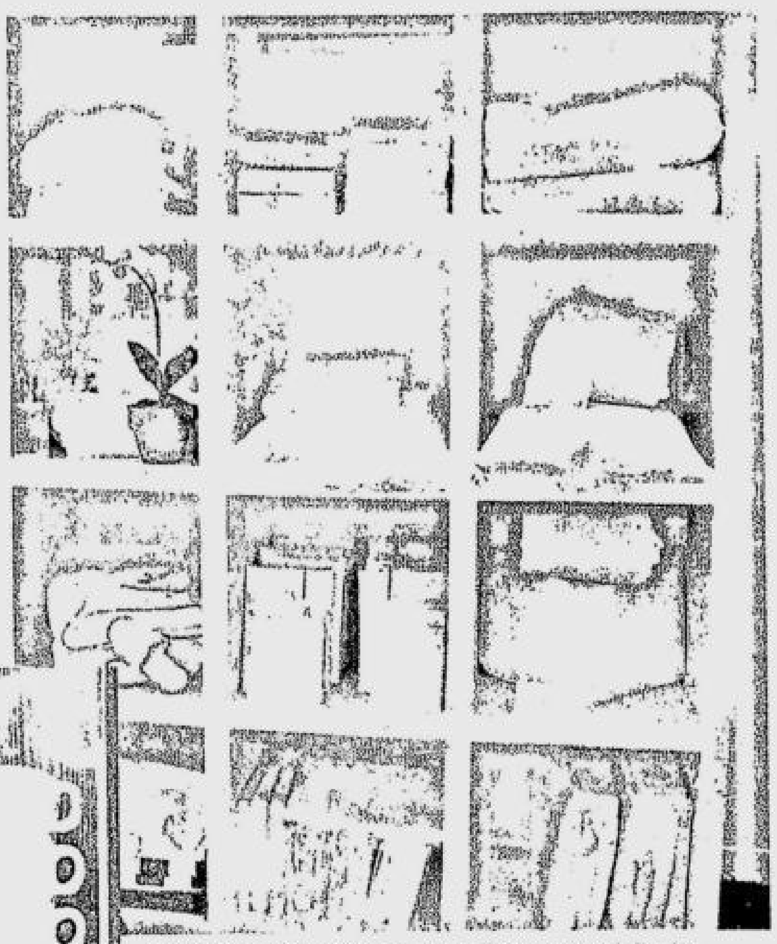
E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

kewers



GENERIC-LOOKING and sturdy flatware

HOTEL staples now within your reach include glassware and dinnerware



IMMACULATE white and fluffy bed and bath basics

BREAD basket made of glass

PINO
PINO
PINO
PINO

LONG-STEM glasses

Sale at Italian furniture house

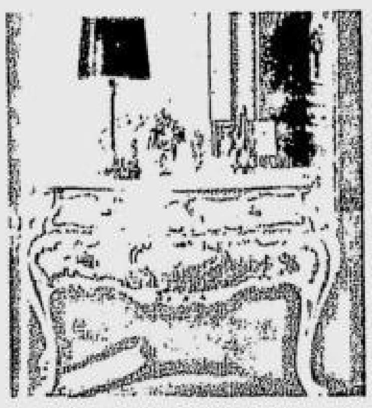
MUEBLES ITALIANO IS holding its Holiday Sale until Dec. 15.

Discounts of up to 50 percent are offered on Muebles Italiano's brands such as Silik, Le Ore, Gallo, Creaciones Cordon, Porcelanne Villari and many others.

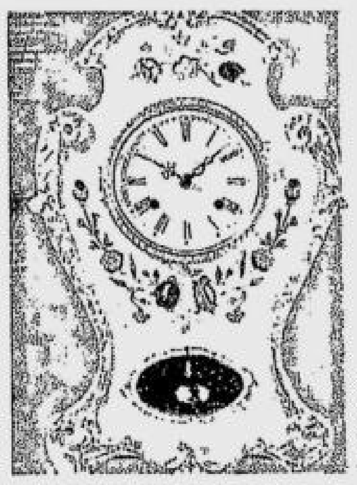
Items on sale range from ornate chandeliers to handcrafted clocks with complicated movements, Louis XIV-style bedroom, dining and living room treatments, wicker furniture, elaborate accent pieces, and more.

Muebles Italiano's items come from the age-old furniture workshops of Italy that fuse art and function and integrate them into everyday living.

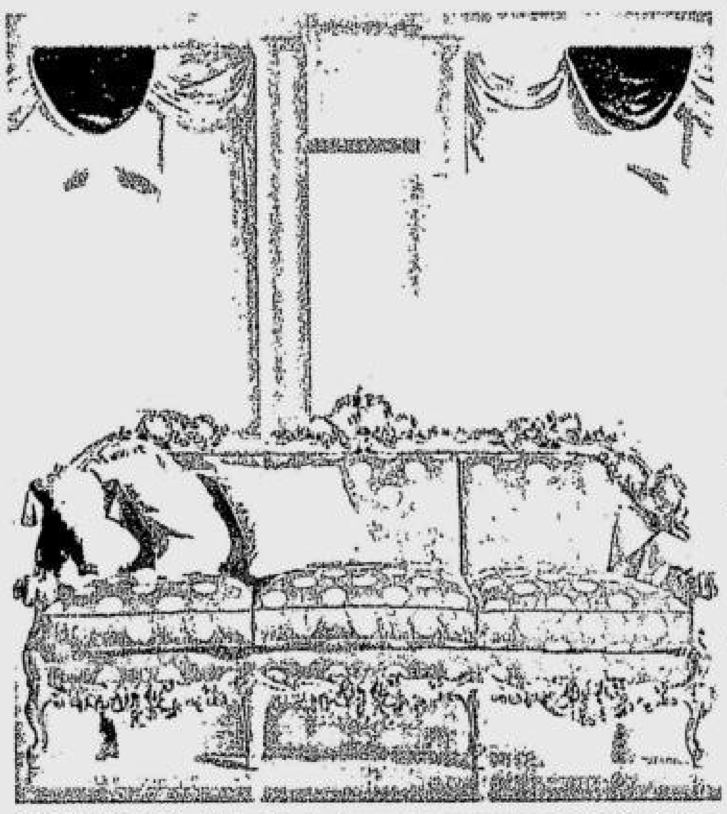
Muebles Italiano's flagship store is at G/F Alabang Corporate Center, Km 25 West Service Road, SLEX, Alabang, Muntinlupa City (8427036). Its branches are at Glorietta 4 (8178948), Alabang Town Center (8505146), MC Home The Fort (8193201), SM Megamall (6314453), and SM North Edsa (4530347). Its showrooms are at Ayala Heights in Quezon City and Ayala Alabang.



ITALIAN hand-painted furniture is heavier in line and more emphatic in its decoration, as shown in the Iride model of Muebles Italiano's Silik brand.

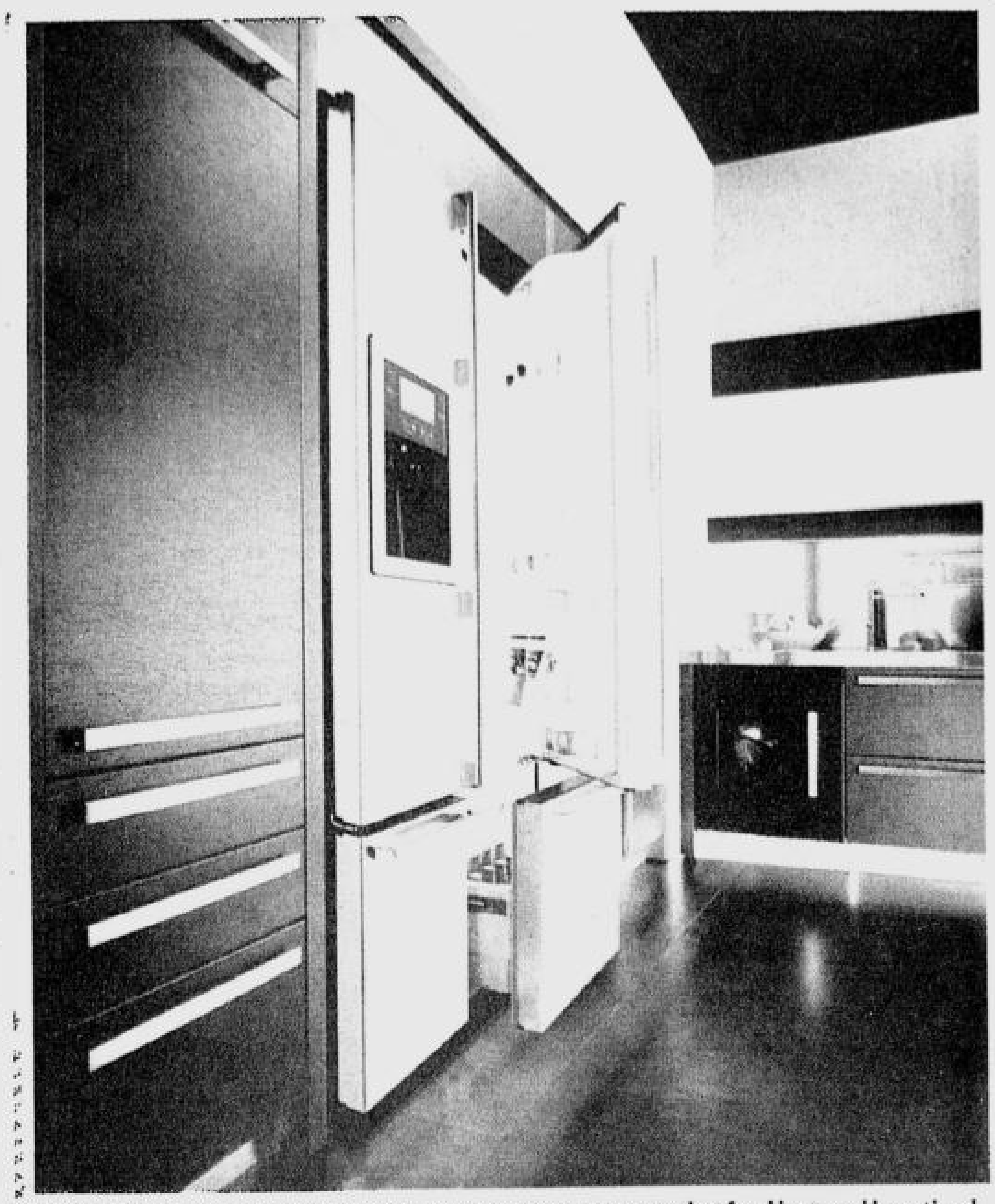


ELEGANT table pendulum with a well-chosen combination of mother-of-pearl background with shades of multicolored woods and 24k gold-plated cast



FURNISHINGS at Muebles Italiano add warmth and sophistication to every room.

An avenue for passionate living
Bonifacio High Street
Bonifacio
Home of passionate minds
forward taguig



SAMSUNG'S refrigerator with Quatro Cooling system ensures that food is stored in optimal humidity and temperature conditions, making food stay fresh and pure.

SAMSUNG'S Vital Ion Room Air Conditioner is able to eliminate various harmful elements such as bacteria and the influenza virus by as much as 99% and 99.6%, respectively.

Technology = refreshing lifestyle

By Michael Dizon Garcia
Contributor

THANKS TO ADvanced technology, lifestyles of many individuals can be better enhanced with breakthroughs such as the Silver Nano Health System—Samsung's unique proprietary technology that uses anti-bacterial properties of silver which are now incorporated into the assembly of Samsung's refrigerators, air conditioners, even washing machines.

This may sound daunting to most homemakers, so in simple terms it just means that consumers can be assured of pure food, comfort, air and a healthy environment when using Samsung's appliances.

When one takes a look at the way well-known personalities and a medical institution experts view the importance of wellbeing, it is easy to conclude that all of them regard good health as the first step to achieving that much-aspired-for quality of life.

Consider the lifestyle views of celebrity mom Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski, Le Souffle's chef Jessie Sincioco and Philippine General Hospital Head of Fiscal Services Dr. Virgilio Novero Jr.

Comfort breaks with Mikee

"Having a silent break is refreshing and rejuvenating especially if you can be by yourself in the air-conditioned comfort of your favorite place at home. For me, it's my bedroom," says multi-awarded equestrienne and mom Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski. Her diverse roles infringe a lot on her need for personal space. When her day is done, she relishes her "alone time" reading and sending e-mails or catching up on her reading.

Samsung air conditioners with Silver Nano Technology kills 99.9 percent bacteria, and what's more, its five-stage filtration effectively eliminates viruses, dust, smoke and other allergens in the air.

Spending quiet and quality time in a bacteria-free environment is definitely one of the ways to lead a healthy, stress-free life.

Fresh is good

Jessie Sincioco is most comfortable when in her official chef's uniform. Jessie has been frequently recognized for her consistently innovative and rated A gastronomic creations at Le Soufflé. She has some helpful tips to share with homemakers when it comes to food storage and preparation.

"When refrigerating food, don't mix meat and seafood. Chicken, in particular, should always be kept at freezing point so if you buy frozen chicken, make sure you have a container with ice, especially if you have to travel some way to get home," says Chef Jessie. "Food that is left unattended in the kitchen is susceptible to bacteria. A lot of people suffer from food poisoning because of salmonella, a type of bacteria that festers in food. Vacuum-packed vegetables, on the other hand, should be soaked in cold water with vinegar for an hour and rinsed three times to preserve the crispiness and ensure that foreign particles are washed away," she advises.

Samsung's refrigerators have a twin-cooling system, which maintains up to 43 percent optimal humidity, 2.5 times more than the conventional refrigerator. The freezer section and the storage/refrigerator section each have its own cooling system, allowing evenly distributed cooling. The Silver Nano technology ensures a 99.9 percent bacteria-free refrigeration which keeps food fresh longer.

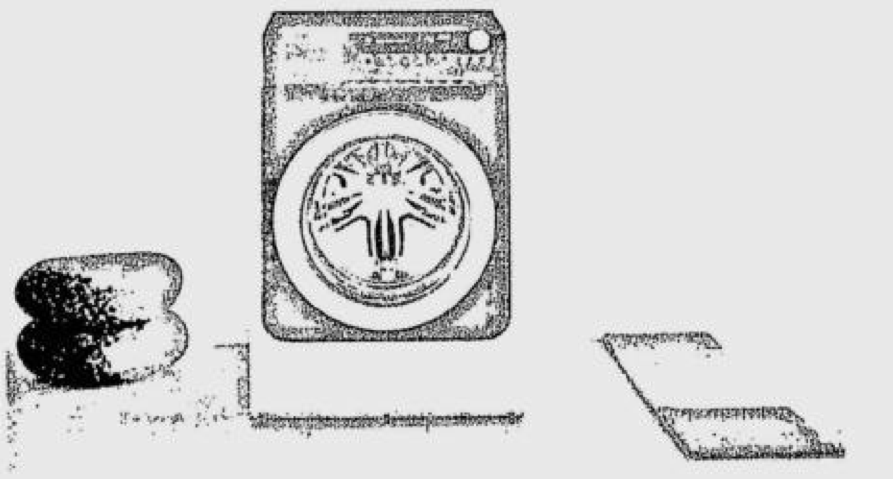
Welcoming the 21st century

The PGH is a historical medical institution, which continues to service almost 600,000 patients a year. Next year, PGH will celebrate its centennial anniversary—a time to recognize its valuable contribution to Filipinos needing medical attention. Because of the sheer number of patients that occupy the hospital at any given time, sanitation is a must.

"The environment at any hospital is, of course, naturally threatened by the spread of bacteria," says Dr. Virgilio Novero Jr., head of Fiscal Services at PGH and member of the Board of Trustees of the PGH Medical Foundation.

A heritage institution such as the PGH recognizes the value of advanced technology in the field of medicine and health care. Washing machines, for instance, are valuable in keeping the bedding in the hospital clean and bacteria free.

Samsung's washing machines are powered with Silver Nano technology which can kill 99.9 percent bacteria. Clothes and hospital linen can be sterilized and deodorized while the Direct Drive Inverter Motor System ensures efficient and quiet washing operation.



SAMSUNG'S Air Wash washing machine offers deodorizing, sterilizing and fabric reconditioning by blowing warm air into the fabric.

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

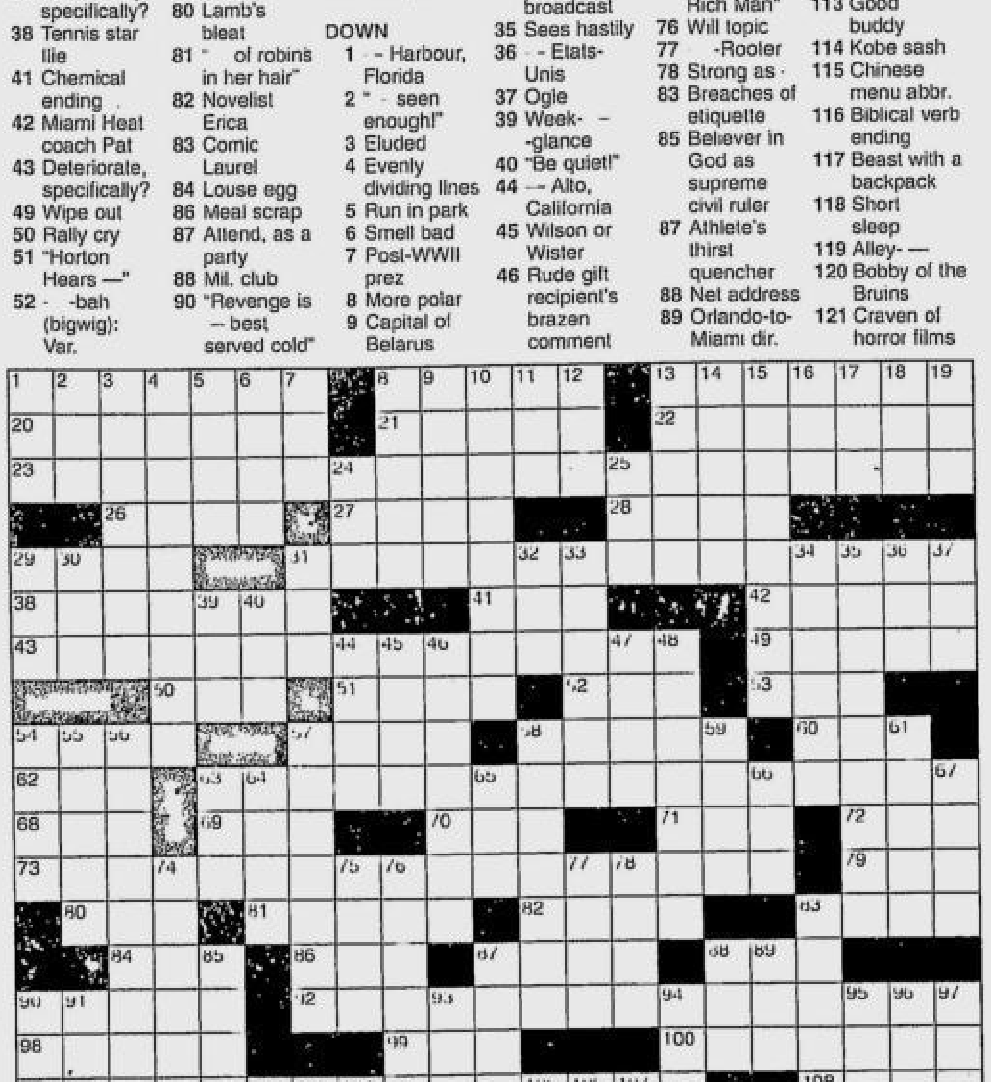
APART

ACROSS

1 Sesame Street resident
8 "Have — myself clear?"
13 Kneecap
20 Shunned
21 French movie theaters
22 It's near a tonsil
23 Leave well enough alone, specifically?
26 Quick look
27 — majesty (treason)
28 Hearts, e.g.
29 Apple that's high-tech
31 Slave away, specifically?
38 Tennis star Ilie
41 Chemical ending
42 Miami Heat coach Pat
43 Deteriorate, specifically?
49 Wipe out
50 Rally cry
51 "Horton Hears —"
52 - -bah (bigwig): Var.
53 Noise
54 Takes steps
57 Zeno of — (Greek philosopher)
58 Ravine
60 Sgt., e.g.
62 - Paulo, Brazil
63 Show off one's wealth, specifically?
68 4/15 payee
69 New Testament bk.
70 Gulp down
71 Altar words
72 "Tonka" star Mineo
73 Quite ill, specifically?
79 Rap sheet abbr.
80 Lamb's bleat
81 " of robins in her hair"
82 Novelist Erica
83 Comic Laurel
84 Louse egg
86 Meal scrap
87 Attend, as a party
88 Mil. club
90 "Revenge is — best served cold"
92 Exist miserably, specifically?
98 Year, to Yves
99 Little one
100 Shirt parts
101 Hangover cure, specifically?
108 Rude men
109 Ad's award
110 500 sheets of paper
111 Tennis score after deuce
113 Overblown affair, specifically?
122 Teetotal
123 — Hawkins Day
124 "Encore!"
125 Not heavily
126 Shell out
127 QBs, often

DOWN

1 - - Harbour, Florida
2 " - seen enough!"
3 Eluded
4 Evenly dividing lines
5 Run in park
6 Smell bad
7 Post-WWII prez
8 More polar
9 Capital of Belarus
10 Hollywood resident
11 Opp. of arrival
12 Paul Anka's "— Beso"
13 City near Venice
14 Improvise
15 Seesawed
16 USNA grad.
17 Online chuckle
18 Nero's 52
19 Fruit drink
24 Yasir Arafat's gp.
25 Sugar suffix
29 Gerund's end
30 - - Zedong
31 Teeny
32 Acct. accrual
33 Maintain
34 Being broadcast
35 Sees hastily
36 - - Etats-Unis
37 Ogle
39 Week- - -glance
40 "Be quiet!"
44 — Alto, California
45 Wilson or Wister
46 Rude gift recipient's brazen comment
47 Function
48 Walloping
54 Sale advisory
55 Indian of the West Indies
56 Conductor Arturo
57 Grain alcohol
58 Become employed
59 Cover up
61 Honshu city
63 Pod resident
64 " -daisy!" (cry to a baby)
65 Easter meat
66 "... a lender be"
67 Zing
74 Old German emperor
75 "If I — a Rich Man"
76 Will topic
77 -Rooter
78 Strong as ·
83 Breaches of etiquette
85 Believer in God as supreme civil ruler
87 Athlete's thirst quencher
88 Net address
89 Orlando-to-Miami dir.
90 Contented sigh
91 Cell stuff
93 "ER" figure
94 Suffix with Milan
95 Sir Walter Scott hero
96 Grazed, e.g.
97 Snaky letter
102 Threshing implement
103 Metallic-sounding
104 Polloi preceder
105 Bolshevik bigwig
106 Stowed, as cargo
107 Little scamp
111 Ballerina Pavlova
112 Colorants
113 Good buddy
114 Kobe sash
115 Chinese menu abbr.
116 Biblical verb ending
117 Beast with a backpack
118 Short sleep
119 Alley- —
120 Bobby of the Bruins
121 Craven of horror films



answer on page D8

Coffee big-shot hits Manila

CONLINS COFFEE COMPANY IS THE newest shop to contribute to Manila's thriving coffee lifestyle.

A division of Pacific Continental Company, Inc., Conlins provides a full range of coffee services. It imports premium roasted coffee beans to be roasted locally, customizes blends and flavoring and offers world-class coffee machines.

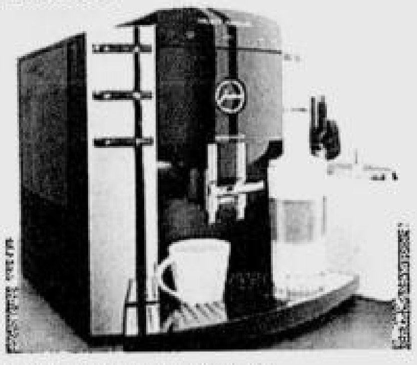
Conlins is the exclusive Philippine distributor of top-of-the-line coffee machines.

It offers Swiss-made Jura super-automatic espresso machines, German-made WMF Espresso Machines and traditional Italian-made La Pavoni semi-automatic espresso machines.

Conlins will soon host "Coffee Talk: An Afternoon with Conlins Coffee Company."

Visit www.conlinscoffee.com or call 5513215/8312729. Check out the Conlins Showroom Café at 2/F, SM Mall of Asia.

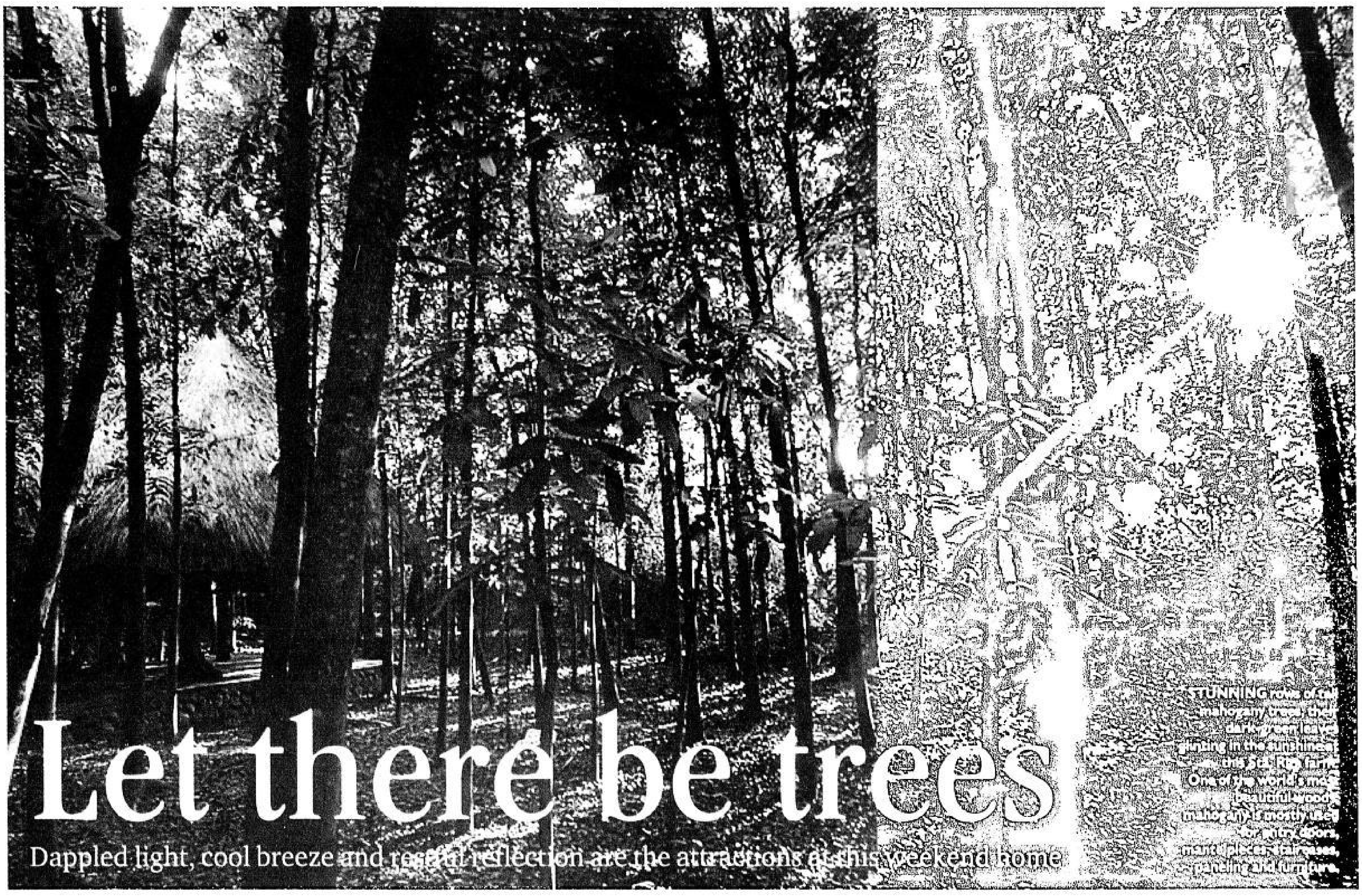
JURA Impressa E80 black



JURA Impressa F9 black

JURA Impressa C5 platinum

JURA Impressa Z5 aluminum



STUNNING rows of the mahogany trees, their dark-green leaves glinting in the sunshine at this Sta. Rita farm. One of the world's most beautiful woods, mahogany is mostly used for entry doors, mantelpieces, staircases, paneling and furniture.

Let there be trees

Dappled light, cool breeze and restful reflection are the attractions at this weekend home

Text by Chelo Banal-Formoso
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

WHEN THEY TELL YOU this farm is tucked away in a small barrio in Sta. Rita, Pampanga, what they really mean is good luck finding it on your own.

It is best to ask a tricycle driver to lead the way from the town proper to the site in barangay Bekuran in barrio Libutad. The route is hardly bucolic. You go past dreary agri-scenes, none of them memorable. And then there it is—a mahogany plantation waiting to enchant anyone willing to make the trip.

A businessman and his wife, both Pampanga-born (and bred), own the farm. They bought the almost six-hectare property in 1992 after the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, when most of their *cabalen* were desperate to leave their lahar-covered hometowns. "Without foresight, one wouldn't have touched this property," says the husband.

The couple put in the roads, which were eventually improved as farm-to-market roads by the local government and which they still help maintain today.

Their first choice was to plant citrus trees. Year after year they waited in vain for fruits. Finally recognizing the horticultural limitations of their place, they decided to switch to mahogany.

"We planted our first mahogany seedlings during the rainy season and that was it. They took care of themselves."

Now that the trees are stunningly tall, there is plenty to please the senses in this secluded paradise. The mahoganies are the main attraction, of course, but there are as well sundry home-grown botanical beauties. Birds wake you up in the morning with their sweet songs. Kapampangan food is served under a canopy of white muslin in an alfresco dining area. A pool provides the water element. Fallen leaves litter the grounds, creating a nice woodland ambiance, not to mention that they are biodegradable and don't cost a centavo.

In this private compound is a series of exotic houses: the first farmhouse made of coconut (now being converted into a full kitchen), the main family home, a guesthouse, a Bali-style rest house by the pool and an Ifugao house. The last, bought straight out of Banawe and reassembled under the shade of mahogany trees, provides the final note which draws the Asian theme together.

The husband has turned these structures into convenient repositories for his collection of antiques and reproductions. "I like anything that brings back the past," he says.

The wife, who loves to garden, has prevented the place from turning into genuine woodland through some tropical landscaping. "It's amateur work, but it saved us almost a million pesos," says she.

The couple started 10 years ago with 3,000 mahogany seedlings planted three meters apart. Today they estimate they have 10,000 trees.

"I'd plant them farther apart if I could start over," says the husband in hindsight. Why? Mahogany trees keep growing in girth as well as in height and have a tendency to crowd out one another and steal the sunlight from low-lying foliage. But you can still hug the trees growing in this farm today. Some of them are only four years old and quite slender.

Lay of the land

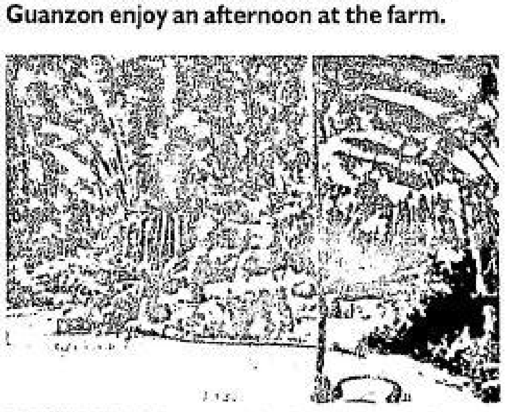
From the front gate an unpaved road leads to what seems like woodland, and then you come upon an area paved with concrete and landscaped with bamboo, ferns and palms. Ornamental yellow and red ginger plants, *rosal* and *sampaguita* soften the forested surroundings.

Under the shade of mahogany trees farther into the property is an outdoor dining area where the family entertains, complete with muslin canopy, cut flowers arranged in a tin vase and a set of old-fashioned *sartin* dinnerware.

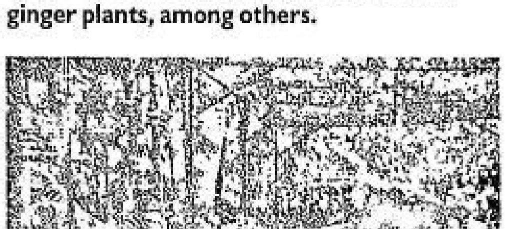
"We have had theme parties here—safaris, Japanese, Western, any old excuse to get together," says the wife. Her youngest son (two older sons are married and residing abroad) has convinced her to rent out the place for small private parties. She has a set buffet menu of *kare-kare*,

LET THERE/ D8

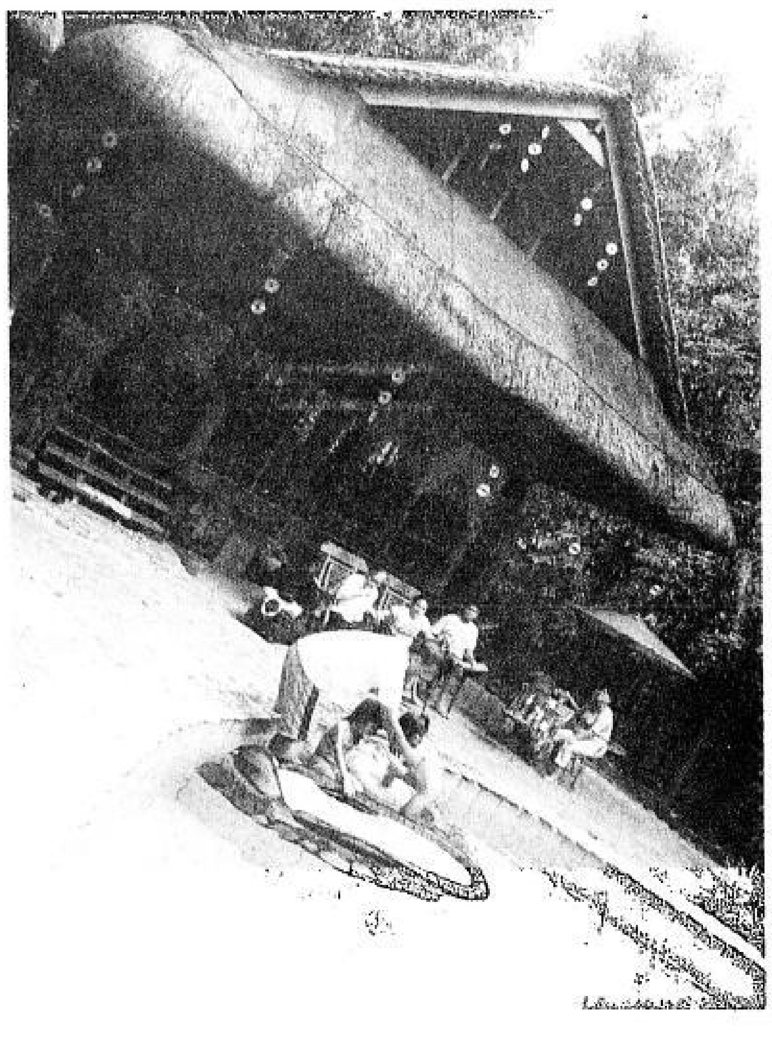
FAIRY godmothers of the ArtiSta Rita choir Butchie Lagman, Wilma Panlileo and Tess Guanzon enjoy an afternoon at the farm.



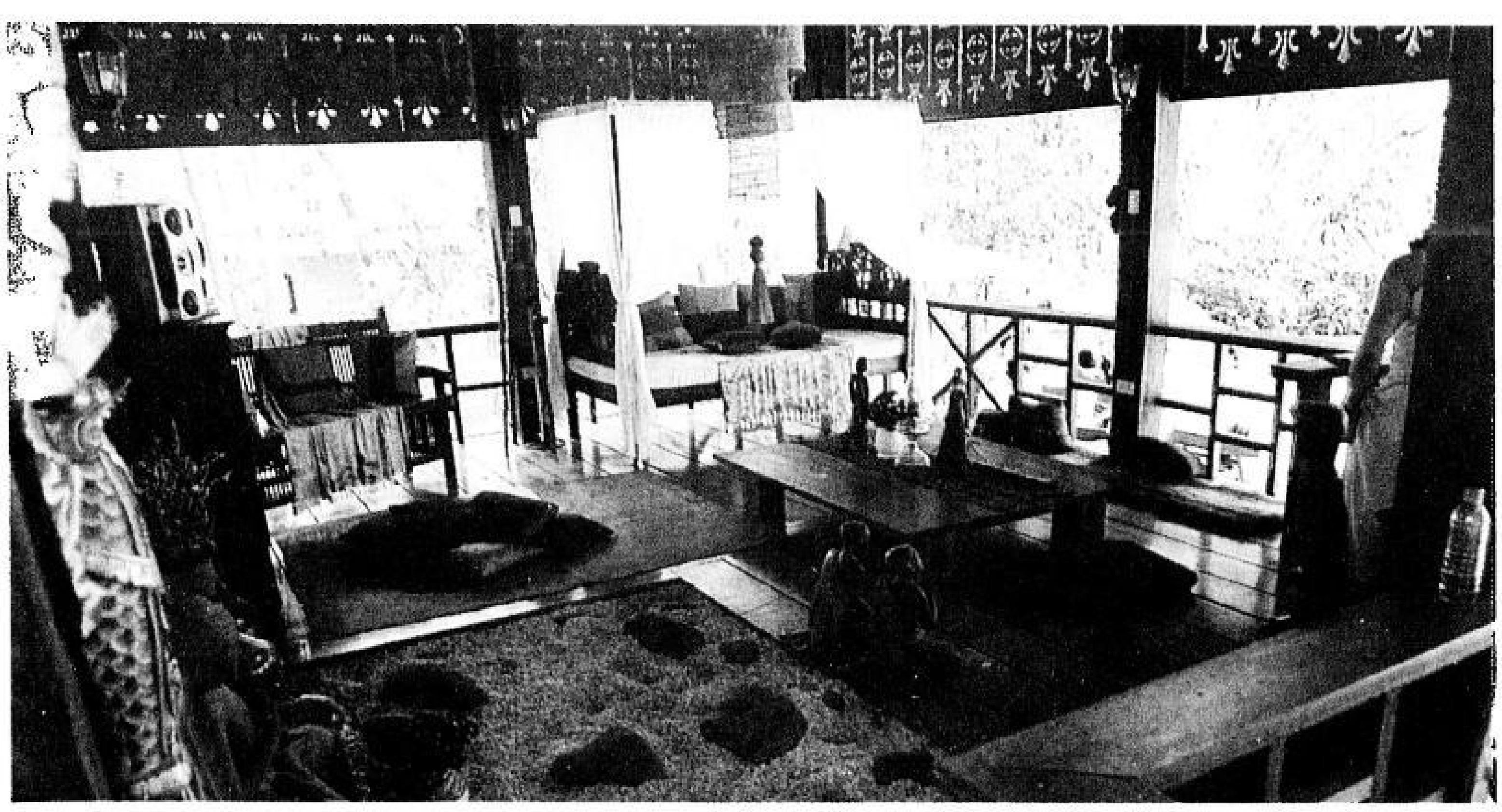
TRAVELER'S fans are the highlight of the landscaping around the pool. They get green support from royal palms, giant ferns and ginger plants, among others.



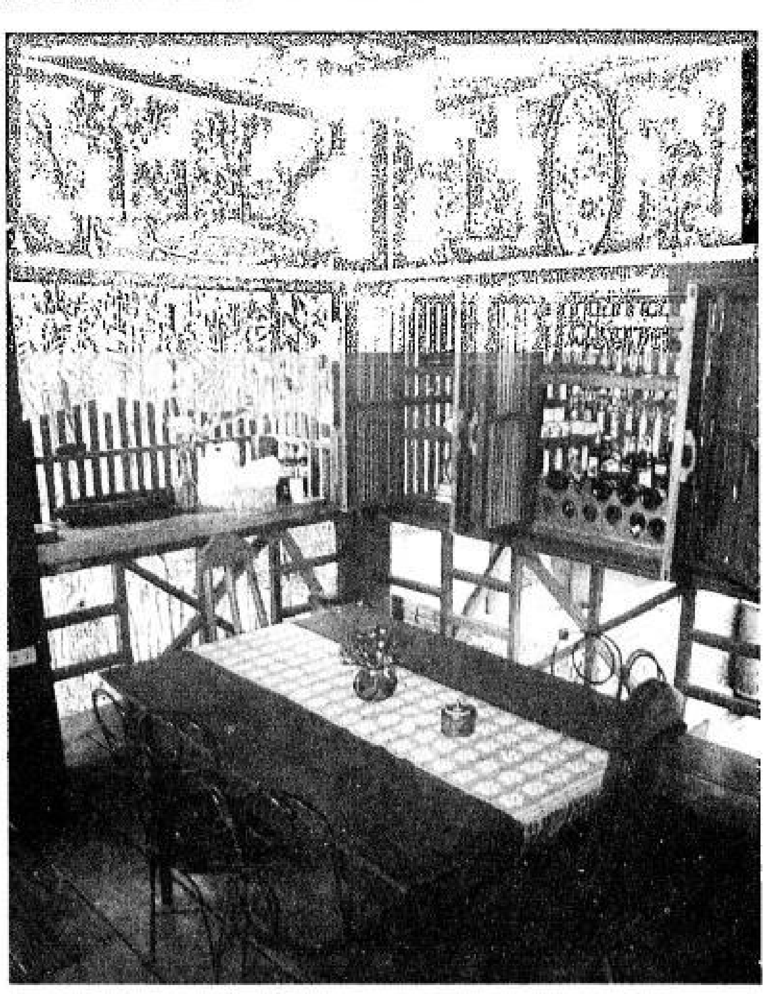
PAVERS cover the grounds not planted to mahogany. Royal palms, ferns and yellow and red ginger plants are favorite foliage.



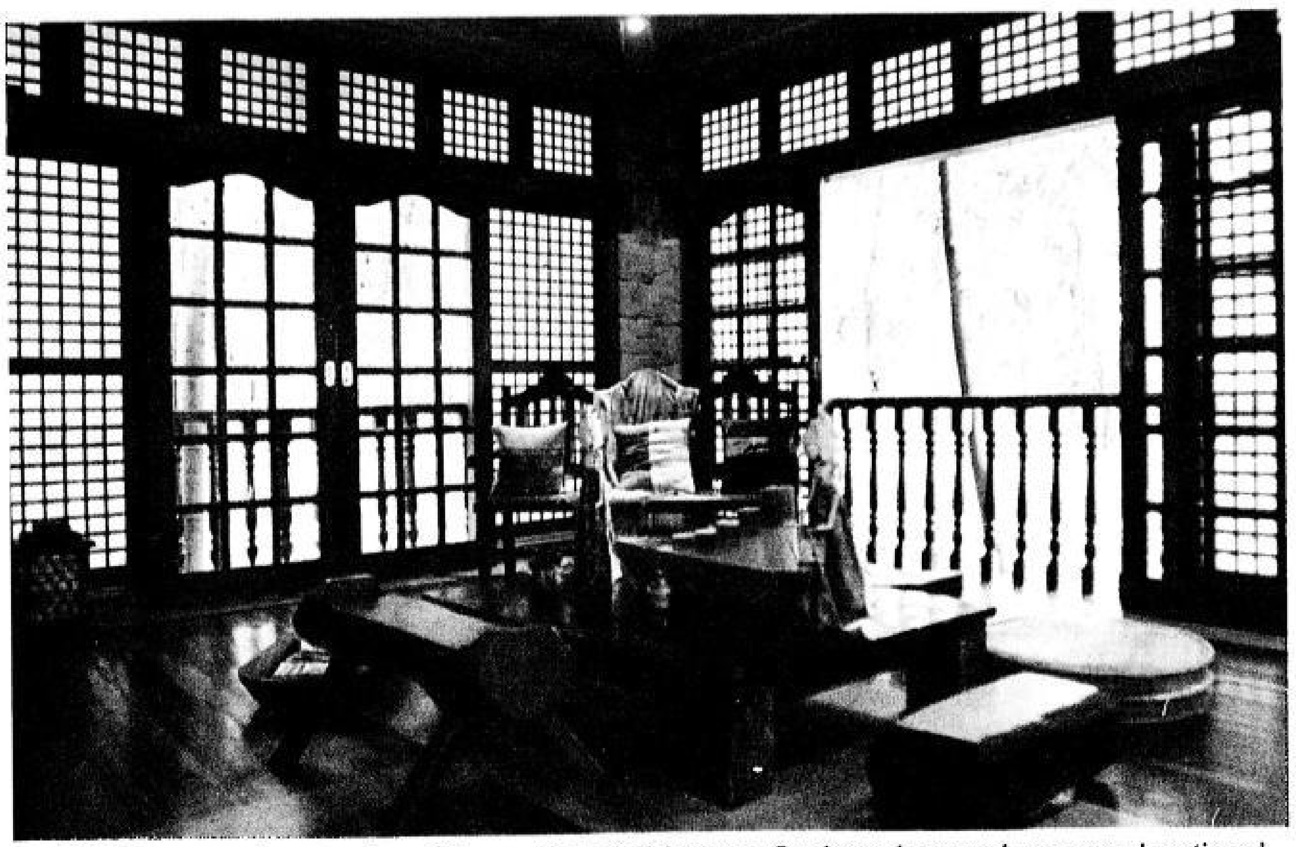
EXTERIOR shot of the Bali house by the pool. Strung-up CDs protect the roof from pecking birds.



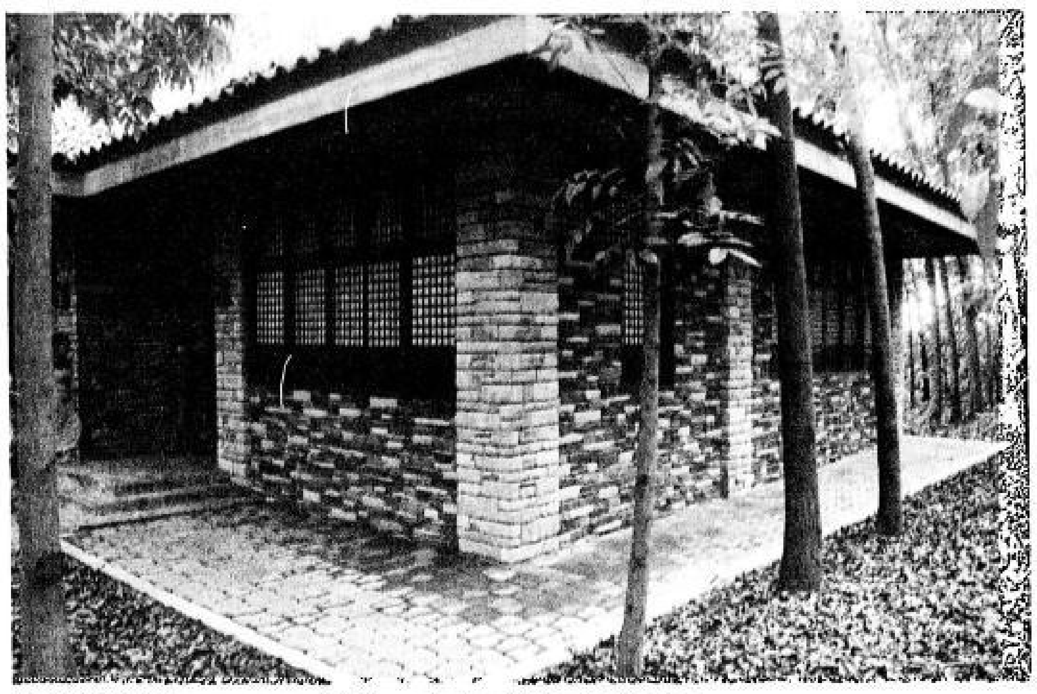
OPEN Bali house overlooking the pool has daybeds for taking naps and sandboxes for meditation zones. Molave was used for beams, posts and *callado* work produced by San Fernando craftsmen.



RUSTIC *batalan* and dining area of the rest house



A *DULANG* becomes the centerpiece of the guest house's living room. Seating and accessories are casual, rustic and tropical. Capiz windows and sliding glass doors are used throughout the house to let in landscape and natural light.



EL DORADO stones are used in the exterior of the guest house.

Let there be trees

From page D7

crispy *pata*, *suam na mais*, crispy *okoy*, steamed veggies and *buro*, Sta. Rita sansrival and *buko pandan*.

Recycled bricks, which are used as flooring in some sections, and pavers, which cover the walkways, lend rustic beauty to the farm. Rocking chairs provide a place to sit, relax and admire the dappled light among the trees.

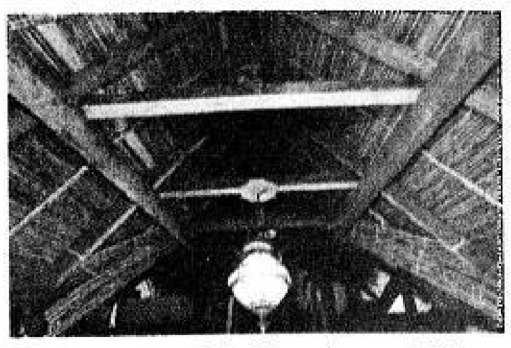
Stone steps lead to a pool and an open rest house with roofing and furnishing that attest to this couple's passion for the tropics, especially Bali. The husband fell in love with the roof of a hotel in Bali so he went around Pampanga looking for someone who could replicate it. No one could, but a sample of what they do, called *nilubid* or braided cogon, floored him. "It was an even better design," he recalls. It took six months to make the twin roofs of the Bali house but it was worth the wait. "This is a craft that we should preserve," he adds.

In contrast, the guest house is equipped with modern conveniences like bathtubs. Although not quite as open as the rest house, the guest house also succeeds in bringing the outdoors in with skylighting and floor-to-ceiling capiz windows.

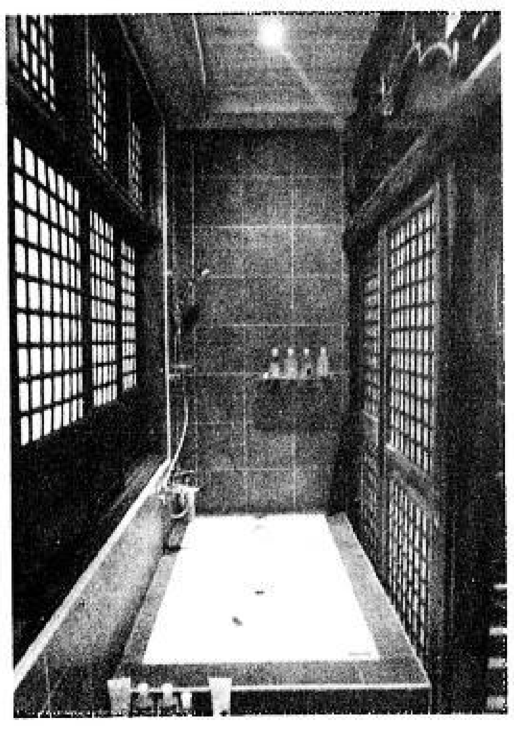
By Friday afternoon the owners are usually northbound to Pampanga from their home south of Manila. It's a lifestyle that's catching. They have inspired previous visitors to their farm to make a habit of weekending among the trees.

To book a party, e-mail mahogany_farm@hotmail.com

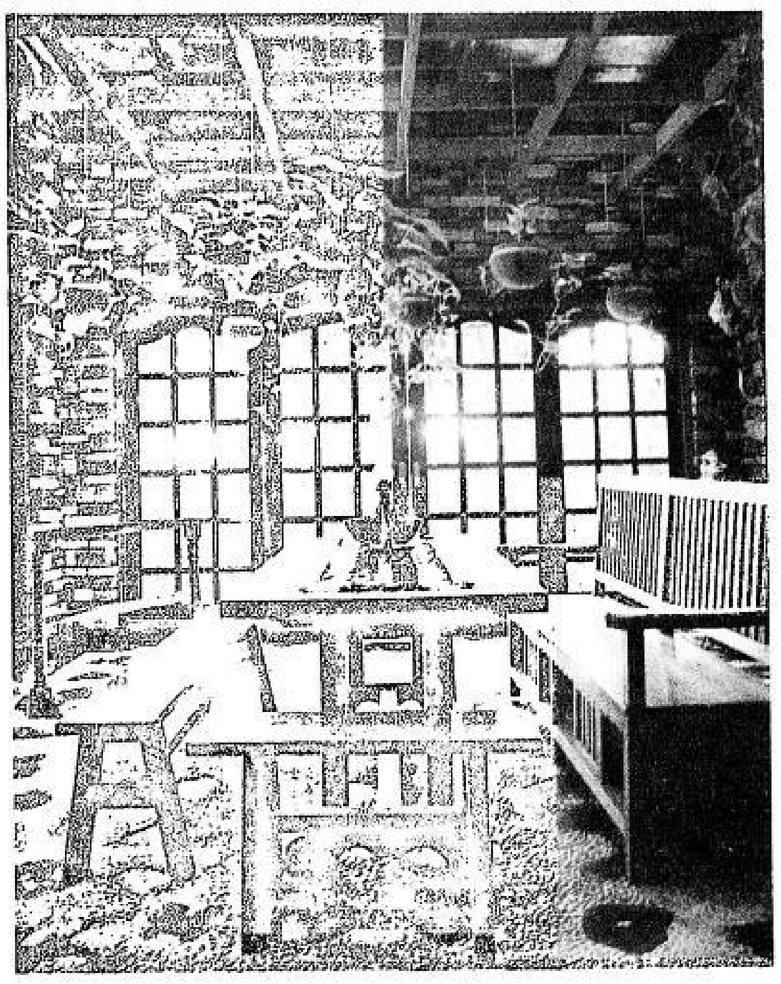
E-mail the author at cbformoso@inquirer.com.ph



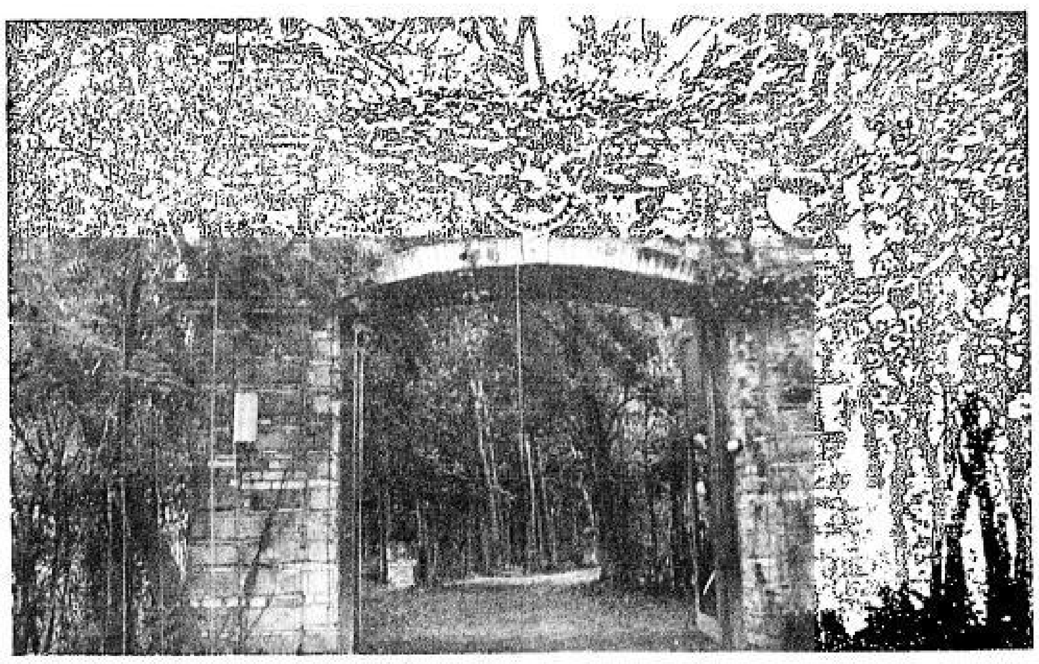
TAMBO roofing of the Ifugao house which was brought from Banawe to Pampanga and rebuilt by three Ifugao men in the farm



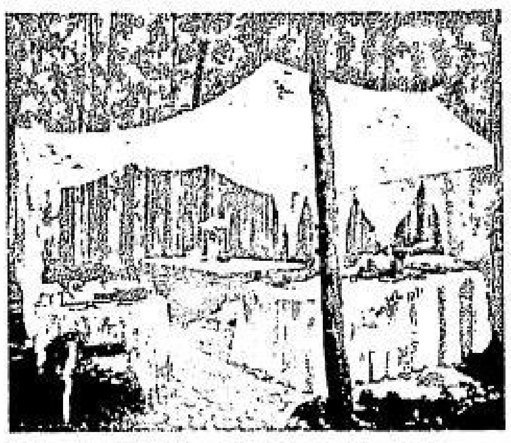
BATH has capiz sliding windows that open to a view of endless mahogany trees.



SKYLIGHTED dining room furnished with *repro gallinera* and country benches. Flooring combines madre cacao and stones. Sliding doors open up to another area planted to mahogany.



GRAND entrance made of tiles from the chimney of the dismantled Pampanga Sugar Mills and adobe from several *bahay na bato* that have been demolished. The tall, wide and heavy doors are made of molave. Millionaire's vines add green effect.



LUNCH of Kapampangan food under mosquito netting and canopy of mahogany trees. The farm's owners rent out to very private parties (10 guests or less).

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

B	I	G	B	I	R	D		I	M	A	D	E		P	A	T	E	L	L	A
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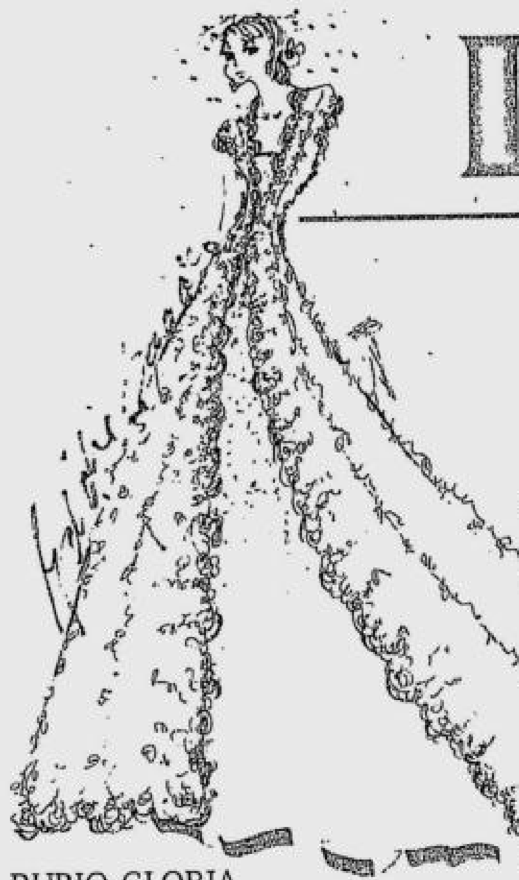

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the INQUIRER, P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.

VIOLETA-ADDURU

Jonathan Violeta, son of Juanito and **Genelita Violeta**, and **Ann Adduru**, daughter of **Roger** and **Ninfa Adduru** will exchange vows Dec. 9 at Shrine of Jesus, The Way, The Truth and The Life. Reception will follow at Hotel Philippine Plaza.

The bride will wear a creation by **Nono Palmos**.

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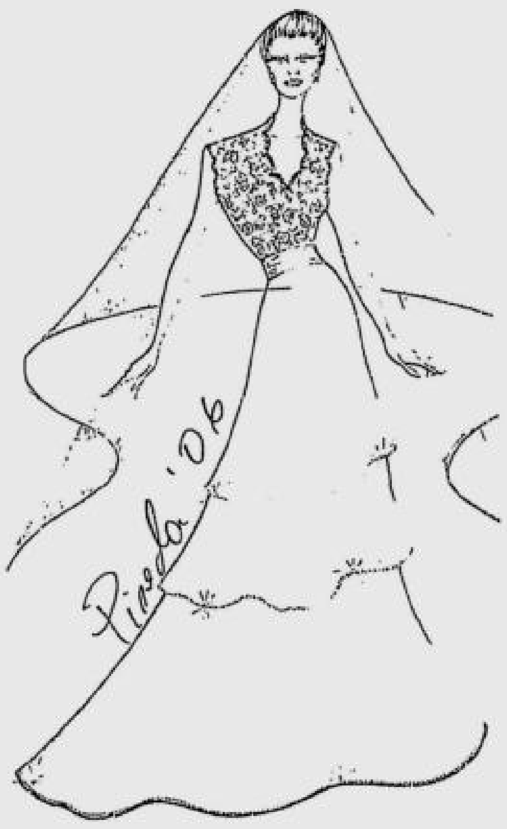
RUBIO-GLORIA

Michael Rubio, son of **Antonio** and **Glory Rubio**, will wed lawyer **Alecon Gloria**, daughter of lawyers **Rene** and **Leticia Gloria**, Dec. 10 at St. Ignatius Cathedral, Camp Aguinaldo, QC. Reception will follow at Bulwagang Tejeros, AFPCOC QC.

The bride will wear pearly white silk cocoon princess-cut gown with hand embroidered opera coat top by **Eddie Baddeo**.



PEREZ-TIMBOL

Neil Perez, son of Doctors **Abraham** and **Teresita Perez**, will wed **Cielo Timbol**, daughter of **Thelma vda. de Timbol**, Dec. 8 at the Basilica of San Sebastian, Manila. Reception will follow at the San Beda Jubilee Garden in Mendiola, Manila.

Eric Pineda designed the bride's ivory French lace gown. The bodice is embellished with iridescent pailettes, faux pearls and rhinestones. It has a three-layered skirt in gazar with caviar beads.

PATTAUI-SANTIAGO

Erwin Pattaui and **Kristine Lauren Santiago** will exchange vows Dec. 8 at the Sacred Heart Church in San Fernando, Pampanga. The bride will wear a gown designed by **Marlon Tuazon**. Reception will follow at Ana's Pavilion in Angeles City.

VALEROSO-SUAREZ

Bryan Valeroso and **Diane Suarez** will wed Dec. 9, at the San Sebastian Cathedral, Tarlac City. Reception will follow at the Ninoy Aquino Center.

NG-REYES

Chin Fei Ng, son of Mr. and Ms **Seng Ng**, and **Teresa Reyes**, daughter of Mr. and Ms **Pedrito Reyes**, exchanged vows recently at the Fernwood Gardens.

SA BAWAT PATAK NG TIWALA

Sa iyo nagmum [illegible] milya An [illegible] kanilang kaligtasan ay pangunahin [illegible] ang takbuh [illegible] o sila nagtit [illegible] Kaya para sa yo handog namin [illegible] Wilkin Distilled [illegible] nking [illegible] at ligta [illegible] buong pamilya Dagdag pa ri [illegible] ang [illegible] atlumpung [illegible] uming par aw [illegible] pampalusog. Sa Coca-Cola [illegible] sasago [illegible] yon [illegible] wat pang [illegible] an Para ma-enjoy mo [illegible] ng bawat patak ng buhay.
[illegible] karagd [illegible]

The Coca-Cola Company
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PURELY PERSONAL
Josephine Darang

27th Intramuros Marian procession this p.m.

AS THE COFRADIA DE LA INmaculada Concepcion holds at 4 p.m. today its 27th Marian procession in Intramuros, Jaime Laya, who headed the Intramuros Administration from 1979, recalls the first Marian procession in 1980.

President Marcos, through a presidential decree, created the Intramuros Administration (IA) to restore the Walled City, which was destroyed during the bombing of Manila in 1945. It also meant restoring traditions honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary on her feast day Dec. 8.

Ado Escudero, who revived the Good Friday procession in San Pablo; Esperanza Gatbonton, IA action officer; Helen Espino, the first *hermana mayor*; Laya and Imelda Cojuangco organized the first procession patterned after the 1955 Marian Congress that gathered images from all over the Philippines.

Different images of the Blessed Virgin on flower-bedecked *carrozas* went around Intramuros. President Marcos waited for the procession at the steps of the Manila Cathedral. The Te Deum was sung. Later, fireworks were lighted at the Plaza de Roma across the cathedral.

After 27 years, the *cofradia*, led by Imelda Cojuangco, keeps the tradition of celebrating the feast of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception on the first Sunday of December.

This year's *hermana mayor* is Carrie Bautista. Aurora Eizmendi is president. Marian images expected to join the procession include Our Lady of Piat from Cagayan Valley; Our Lady of La Salette from Cavite; Our Lady of La Naval; Our Lady of Namacpacan from Luna, La Union; Our Lady of Truth and Justice; Nuestra Señora de Dolores de Turumba from Pakil, Laguna; Nuestra Señora del Rosario from Silang, Cavite.

'Simbang gabi'

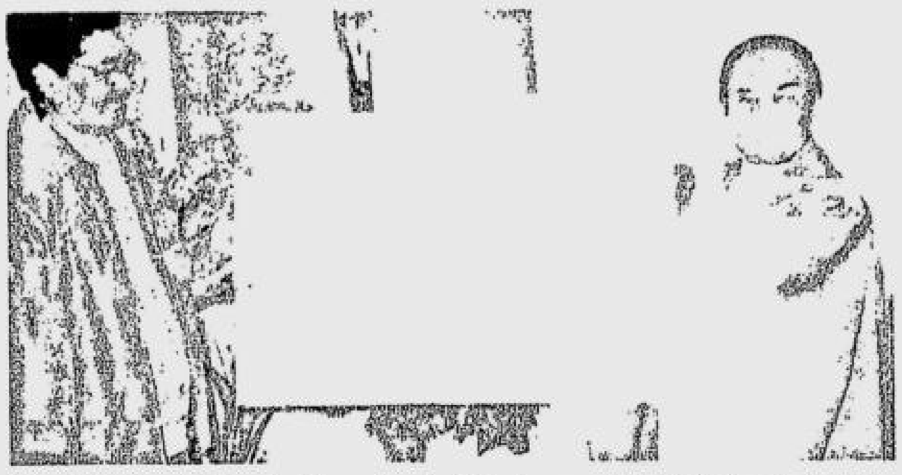
Lights on the oak tree across the Chapel of San Lorenzo Ruiz on Broome Street, New York, will be switched on at 3:30 p.m., Dec. 13, by Fil-American newscaster Nina Pineda of Channel 7-NY.

Fr. Erno Diaz, administrator of the Filipino Apostolic Center, said Filipinos in the area faithfully attended *simbang gabi*.

Zenaida Abbariao is among those who attend Mass at the chapel. Also active are Gavino Abaya, artist Lenore Lim, Judith Magnaye of the United Nations Development Program, pastoral council president. Dr. Basilio Balajadia, formerly of De la Salle College, and his wife Concepcion volunteer in the chapel on Sundays.

Fr. Cordovez accompanies the choir on the organ during the Mass.

Fr. Diaz said little *parol* would light up the oak tree and the chapel would have a *belen* and native decorations inside. Filipinos visiting New York can call (212)9661019 for directions.


BICOLANO artist Pancho Piano donates "San Lorenzo Ruiz" painting to Fr. Erno Diaz.

Pancho Piano donated a painting of San Lorenzo Ruiz to give thanks for his successful exhibit Nov. 6-15 at the Philippine Center. Consul-General Cecille Rebong cut the ceremonial ribbon with Abaya, Fr. Diaz, Reggie Belen and Oriental Mindoro Congressman Rodolfo Valencia.

Artists Lenore, Emilia "Baby" Monroy and Chato Monrado prepared snacks complemented with fried *lumpia* by Zeny Abbariao. Janice Lingad-Thabet, who was editor of Miscellaneous magazine in Manila, was also there.

A plaque dedicated by then First Lady Imelda Marcos in 1974 was restored.

Centennial

St. Scholastica's College alumni will gather today for Community Day at the school campus to celebrate their alma mater's Grand Centennial. Activities include a Holy Mass at the Ninoy Aquino Memorial Stadium, presentation of "generation awards" and the 100 Outstanding Alumnae Awards, reunion of the boys of Mother Gratia, tribute to St. Scholastica's alumni presidents, and dinner.

Fundraiser

The Saint Augustine Seminary and its alumni are presenting a fundraising concert for diocesan priesthood in the Apostolic Vicariate of Calapan (Oriental Mindoro). The Christmas Acoustic Gospel Concert, "Isang Mundong Mapayapa," featuring Fr. Mimo Perez will be held 6:30 p.m., Dec. 9, at the University of the Philippines Diliman Theater. Special guests include violinist John Lesaca , Hangad Choir and Manila GEN (Focolare).

Tickets are available at the Lahing Mangyan Formation Center, 654 Estremadura St., Sampaloc, 97432621; Sto. Niño Cathedral, Calapan City (043)2888159; SASMA, Tagaytay (046)4131319 or at the gate. Call 0928-3769132 and 0917-8310516.

Hour of grace

Dec. 8 is the feast of Our Lady Rosa Mistica. The "hour of grace" is 12-1 p.m. Psalm 51 is recited and prayers follow. The Chapel of Sta. Marta in Harrison Plaza celebrates a special Mass at 12 noon every 13th of the month for Rosa Mistica. Dr. Teresa Bitanga Valeros donated an icon of the Virgin that is brought out during the Mass. Fr. Nick Blanquisco, parish priest of Our Lady of the Assumption in Leveriza, Malate, says Mass.

Consecration

Cardinal Rosales will consecrate the Archdiocesan Shrine of Nuestra Senora de Guia at 2 p.m., Dec. 3. The the altar and church posts will be blessed with holy oil.

Procession

The Alay kay Maria Foundation marks the feast of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception with a Marian procession at 4 p.m., Dec. 8. The parish has an exhibit of Marian images.

COFRADIA officers and members: Lulu Tesoro-Castañeda, Carrie Abad-Bautista, *hermana mayor* 2006; Imelda Cojuangco, founding chair; Aurora Eizmendi, president; and Rosita Lesaca. Standing: Nene Leonor, Allan Tengco, Clifford Chua, Marietta Santos, Vicky Tengco, Ado Escudero, Nenuca Blardony, Danny Dolor and Helen Ong

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EMILY'S POST
Emily A. Marcelo

Trivial matter ruins close friendship

DEAR EMILY,

I like reading your advice column. I am a Chinese from Taipei and I have a problem.

My girl friend and I have known each other for over 15 years. She has been my best and close classmate since junior high school. We talk to each other frequently and got along well—until recently.

You wouldn't believe that we had a fierce quarrel over a very trivial matter. Both of us insisted we were both right and we wouldn't and couldn't agree on a compromise. The other's side was wrong, we two insisted.

Can you imagine what the language of silence says? How do I deal with this?

DEBRA

When two hard-headed, obstinate friends clash, with no sign of either one giving in and swallowing that bitter pride, there's no other recourse but to let things cool off for a while.

Never mind if they've been friends of long standing. It's like two bulls at loggerheads. There's nothing anybody can do but wait and see who bows out first.

You and your friend have had a history and, no matter how hurt both of you were by this supposedly "trivial matter," time will heal that wound.

It may not be next week or next month, but someday, somehow—when you two meet again, you'll accidentally look at each other and realize how absurd your quarrel was and what a waste of energy it was to lose a valuable friendship such as yours.

But, just as you cannot hurry the day to end, or will a tree to grow at the speed you want, your problem with your friend will have to mend on its own sweet time if you want your relationship to return. Just be patient. Good things come to those who wait.

E-mail the author at emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph, Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to Inquirer. Listen to Ms Marcelo cohost the program "Kalikasan Vigilante," 7:15-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dwBR 104.3 FM.

Rainy but memorable coming of age

IT WAS A NIGHT OF GATHERING FOR family and friends, some of whom flew in from various parts of the country to witness Katrina Krizzel Chu's rite of passage as a debutante.

The rainy weather did not dampen the spirits of more than 200 of the Chu family's closest family and friends who joined the festivities at Grand Palazzo Royale, a world-class banquet and reception hall in Angeles City.

An ethereal Sarah Brightman song played as Krizzel, a sophomore at St. Paul University, made her way into the grand ballroom. Fog, bubbles and confetti greeted the debutante as she walked onto the stage, dressed in a pink number designed by Marlon Tuazon.

As with any debutante celebration, the *cotillion de honor* was the highlight of the event. The audience watched as the debutante and 17 of her friends gracefully danced the "Emperor's Waltz" and "Blue Danube."

Capping the night was the ceremonial blowing of the debutante's cake—a three layer carrot-walnut fondant cake made by Breads o' Cakes. It was surrounded by satellite cakes which served as souvenirs.

A hundred butterflies were released by the debutante's sponsors, her numerous *ninong* and *ninang* as she entered the world of womanhood. Among them were Rep. Francis "Blueboy" Nepomuceno, Mayor Tonypep Raymundo, Mayor Blas Canlas, Nancy Harel, PS Supt. James Melad, PS Supt. Job Nolan Antonio, PC Supt. Wilfredo Dulay, Rodolfo Aragon, lawyer Edward Villarta, Rommel Canlas, Ernie Sapnu, John Nash, Danilo Chu, Tess Lim, Marilou Co, Josefina Soriano, Nida Balajadia, Baby Ong, Mimi Ong, Betty Quirolgico, Elizabeth Tranquilino, Grace Banag, Benny Co, Erna Trosgard.

A sumptuous buffet was prepared by the resident chefs, and wine was served as the beaming dad offered a teary but inspiring message to her youngest daughter.

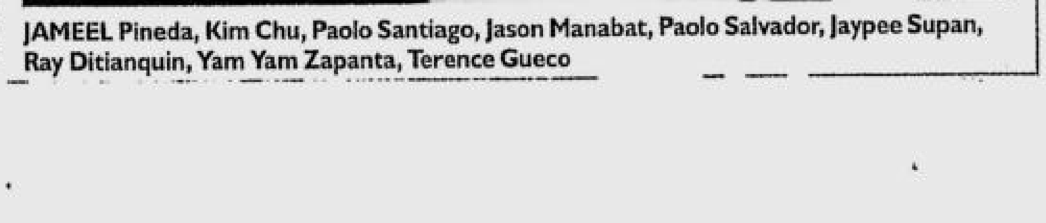
Everyone had a wonderful time dancing a medley of cha-cha, swing and soca to the exhilarating music of the Quintah band. It was, indeed, a memorable party.

THE DEBUTANTE at the main hallway of GPR

FONDANT carrot-walnut cake

THE DEBUTANTE and family: her sister Krizia, parents Remedios and Ricardo, with brothers Kleavant and Kieffer

TONY Co, Baby Ong, Marilou Co, Elizabeth Tranquilino, Betty Quirolgico, debutante, escort, Benny Co, Nancy and Itsik Harel, Brace Banag and Mimi Ong


JAMEEL Pineda, Kim Chu, Paolo Santiago, Jason Manabat, Paolo Salvador, Jaypee Supan, Ray Ditianquin, Yam Yam Zapanta, Terence Gueco

Sweet gifts are made of these

VERTU at Lucerne Jewelers: Emerson and Lingling Yao, Vertu PR Constance Chew, Vertu managing director Ranjit Wijedasa, Ivan and Tessie Yao and Vertu regional manager Eric Khoo

From page E4

star hotel. The core group of surgeons, doctors and dentists has impeccable credentials and many years of experience.

If you're not yet brave enough for the little tuck here and there, at least check out the clinic's laser teeth-whitening services—perfect after all the wine and food we'll be eating this season.

But surely, in this modern world, the time has come to make the gift of beauty an acceptable one! What would your reaction be if your loved one gave you a gift certificate to Beverly Hills 6750? Why, just smile and say, "Thank you and Merry Christmas!"

E-mail me at seaprincess@ inquirer.com.ph.

BEAUTIFUL people Fabio Idle, Binibining Pilipinas Lia Ramos, Diether Ocampo and IWC communications manager Rachelle Elliot

L'OPERA chef Moreno Mattei conducts the singing entertainment of his staff.

Bazaar offers native crafts & designer items

ALI MALL HAS OPENED THE ABSOLUTELY Christmas Holiday Bazaar at the Ali Mall Exchange (ground floor entrance near Rustan's Superstore).

It offers Christmas décor, imported carpets and rugs, toys, scented candles, native crafts and other gift items at reasonable rates.

Also available at bargain prices are items from top labels including Penshoppe, Adidas, Solo, Freeway, Oxygen and Royal Sporting House.

Ali Mall's Absolutely Christmas Bazaar is open during mall hours until Jan. 10. Ali Mall is located at the Araneta Center. Log on to www.aranetacenter.net.

Month-long celebration

Festival Supermall offers a whole month of yuletide music, competitions, prizes and surprises.

Events include the gay beauty competition in a special Mardi Gras pageant hosted and judged by the stars of "Reyna," Viva's latest movie to be released Dec. 6.

Ongoing until Dec. 10 is the 2nd International Bazaar at the Carousel Court. At least 10 embassies and international organizations are showcasing their arts, food and crafts. Twenty trips to Singapore, two trips to Malaysia and other trips to international destinations are being given away. Kuh Ledesma holds a concert to close the event on Dec. 10.

The Leggiero Strings will perform Dec. 15, 18 and 21 while the Ecole de Ballet Manille will perform with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra Dec. 16.

Sitti performs classic pop and jazz Dec. 17 while the Birthright Foundation presents a Christmas concert Dec. 20. The Great Magicians Show will be presented Dec. 22.

On Dec. 23, kids can go around the mall for free goodies, capped by a Magic Show by Lou Hilario. Another performance is scheduled on Dec. 30.

Call 8503514. Festival Supermall is at the Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

Christmas play

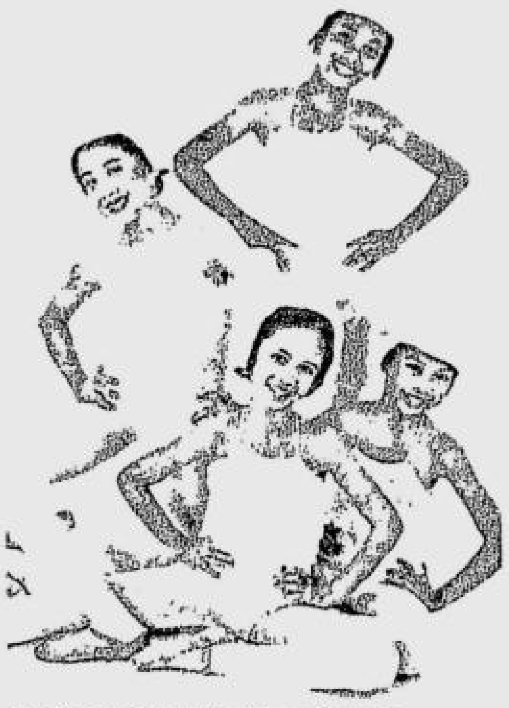
Westgate, the premier upscale commercial development of Filinvest Alabang, presents a series of Christmas events and activities.

Ecole de Ballet Manille presents a Christmas play Dec. 9 at the Cul De Sac.

Southside Customs brings "Cruizin' Nights" Dec. 16-17 at the Auto Cluster parking area. It will feature musical performances by Keith Martin, Pikaso, Seven of Wisdom and other artists. Special appearances by the top celebrities led by international artist Apl. de .Ap of the Black Eyed Peas are also expected.

A Christmas Fair will be held Dec. 15-30. It will feature bands, fashion shows, contests and Fireworks display.

Westgate Alabang is at Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Call 8503516 or 8503515. Visit www.westgatefilinvest.com.



ECOLE de Ballet Manille performs a Christmas play at Westgate Alabang, Dec. 9.

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TO
The Hunky Idol.
Isang prinsipe pero may kulang sa buhay niya.
Ito na kaya ang hinahanap niya?
MAU MARCELO
The Soul Idol.
Laging pinipintasan ang kanyang itsura.
Mapatunayan na kaya niya ang tunay niyang ganda?
GIAN MAGDANGAL
The Livewire Idol.
Nawala na ang lahat sa kanya.
Mabawi kaya niya ang lahat ng isinakripisyo niya?
6 NA TULOG NA LANG!
IKAW ANG PIPILI NG IDOL NG BAYAN!
THE BIG 3 AT THE BIG DOME!
DECEMBER 9 AND 10, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, 9PM
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Iba Tayo!
Kapartner sa paghahanap ng 1st Philippine Idol
SM SUPERMALLS
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YES! FM 101.1
90.7 LOVE RADIO
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9PM TONIGHT!
ALAMIN ANG TUNAY NA LABAN NG BAWAT IDOL!

WATCH enthusiasts Raymond Go and Luther Jao

DAIMLERCHRYSLER VP Jochen Carle and Lucerne Jewelers owner Ivan Yao

COOL and pretty Jasmin Von Oerezen and Gerald Yao

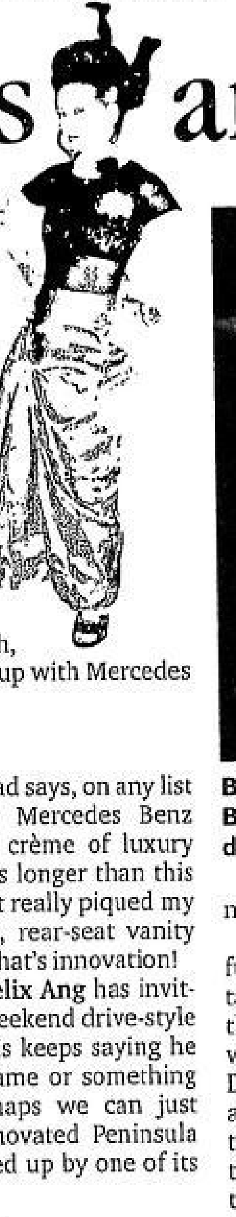
MALL of Asia GM Steven Tan and PR guru Keren Pascual

BENCH giants Miguel Pastor and Ben Chan

NEW York Marathon finisher Fernando Zobel and lovely wife Kit

Sweet gifts are made of these

What better way to handle the perils of holiday gift-giving than making a list and checking it twice?



TESSA!

Tessa Prieto-Valdes

CHRISTMAS IS DEFINITELY in the air! What better way to handle the perils of holiday gift-giving than making a list and checking it twice? For the seasoned shopper, it's an easy chore. For others, the shopping season is a time for angst—playing the matching game with names and gifts, plus the inevitable, last-minute recycling for people you've forgotten just hours before Christmas Eve.

Every year, I try to make the list as early as October. But this year, I somehow got started only now, when the social calendar is getting so busy with festivities. In the end, the ones whom I love most get the ridiculous gifts because I didn't have enough time to think about what they might really want.

Let's check what the ultimate shopping list might include.

The newest symbol of style and sophistication is now the luxury mobile phone, Vertu. Exclusively available at Lucerne Jewelers at Glorietta 4 and Shangri-La Plaza, the Vertu Constellation Collection, along with the equally sumptuous Vertu Signature and Ascent mobile phones, made a sparkling splash when it arrived on Philippine shores just in time for the holidays.

The Vertu line combines craftsmanship, technology and precious metals into magnificent pieces of equipment. The Constellation has a "quad-band engine" and among its many functions is a world clock that gives the time at home and in three locations simultaneously.

Meanwhile, the Vertu Ascent combines the feel of hand-stitched leather with a new metal alloy that "can withstand being run over by a Porsche," according to Global PR director **Constance Chew.** Hmm. And might that Porsche be driven by a jealous wife who has just scrawled through her philandering hubby's inbox?, I wondered.

As I daydreamed about phone dramas at Lucerne Jewelers, I was drawn to the gorgeous IWC pilots' watches. The new range of Classic Pilot's Watches from the Spitfire collection was recently launched at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall.

Lucerne owners **Ivan** and **Emerson Yao** have done well to focus on exclusive brands, which are perfect for those Christmas shoppers with impeccable tastes and commensurately expansive budgets. Among their new timepieces is the IWC Midsize Mark XVI—ideal for slender, metrosexual wrists, now available at Chronos at Power Plant Mall and SM Megamall.

Soaring images of airplanes in flight and life-size cutouts of French hero **Antoine de Saint-Exupery**, who is IWC's inspiration for a limited-edition model, were displayed at the launch. I was glad to get reacquainted with **Etienne de Gramont**, IWC managing director for Asia Pacific, whom I met when IWC launched its Ingenieur watch, a brilliant, luxury brand tie-up with Mercedes Benz.

Luxury sedans

Speaking of which, as its ad says, on any list there is always the new Mercedes Benz S-Class. This crème de la crème of luxury sedans has a list of features longer than this space can provide, but what really piqued my interest was the overhead, rear-seat vanity mirror that lights up. Now that's innovation!

Cats Motors president **Felix Ang** has invited my husband and I to a weekend drive-style to enjoy the car, but Dennis keeps saying he has a meeting or a golf game or something else every weekend. Perhaps we can just check in at the newly renovated Peninsula Manila Hotel and get picked up by one of its new Benz S-Class cars.

The Pen and Mercedes Benz had a wonderful launch at The Conservatory for the presentation of the hotel's new fleet of cars. Car enthusiasts and business executives mingled while listening to sultry singer **Julie Duncan.** Dashing Pen GM **David Batchelor** told me about the hotel's upcoming 30th anniversary this Thursday, Dec. 7—an occasion to unveil the hotel's new look. The festive season will truly be in high gear with traditional celebrations like the Christmas Concert at The Pen and the New Year's Eve Ball at The Lobby soon to come.

Fine wines

No holiday list would be complete without a bit of bubbly. Bacchus International (tel. 8135022 at Makati Shangri-La) distributes the finest wines from all over the world. Owners **Alex** and **Clifford Lichaytoo** are truly passionate about the labels they carry. Both personally travel to various vineyards and invite wine connoisseurs to evenings of wining and dining to really appreciate their wines.

Bacchus recently hosted a dinner to introduce the fine wines of Antinori at one of my favorite Italian restaurants, L'Opera. The delicious menu, prepared by chef **Moreno Mattei**, was matched with equally excellent Antinori wines that were described by vineyard owner **Alessia Antinori**. She belongs to the influential Florentine family that has been making wine in Tuscany and Umbria for 26 generations, since 1385.

Her father, wine-maker **Piero Antinori**, became the voice of Italy in wine circles by single-handedly creating the super Tuscan phenomenon Sassicaia, a cabernet sauvignon aged in small oak barrels. Thus, chatting with the daughter of one of world's oldest and most distinguished wine producers made the evening a unique dining experience for me.

On this ultimate list, along with a new phone or a new watch or a new car, you can now add... a new look! Beverly Hills 6750 Cosmetic Surgery and Skin Institute (tel. 8938888 or check out www.bh6750.com) offers the most confidential, dedicated and professional services in aesthetic plastic surgery, aesthetic dermatology and cosmetic dentistry.

Its personal touch is noticeable upon entering the clinic, which looks more like a five-

SWEET/E3

BEVERLY Hills 6750 Cosmetic Surgery and Skin Institute owners: (seated) Jessica Rodriguez-Bunevacz, David Bunevacz, Dr. Eduardo Santos; and the rest of the expert medical and dental team

TIME lovers Angelette Calero, Rep. Miles Roces and Leah Puyat

FAMILY matters: Kenneth and Cindy Yang with INQUIRER Super's Tim Yap

LOVELY guests at The Pen: Mia Borromeo, Marilou Batchelor, The Pen GM David Batchelor and DaimlerChrysler president Dr. Rainer Thiel

CATS Motors PR Emy Arcilla, Cathay Pacific Airlines' Vivian Lo, Liz Almoro, Grace Ang, Mike Toledo and Cats Motors president Felix Ang

IWC TEAM. Rachelle Elliot, Keith Law, managing director Etienne de Gramont and John Chan

ANTINORI Wines owner Alessia Antinori with Italian Ambassador Rubens Fedele and elegant wife Cosetta

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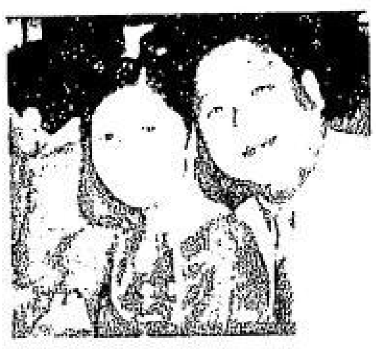
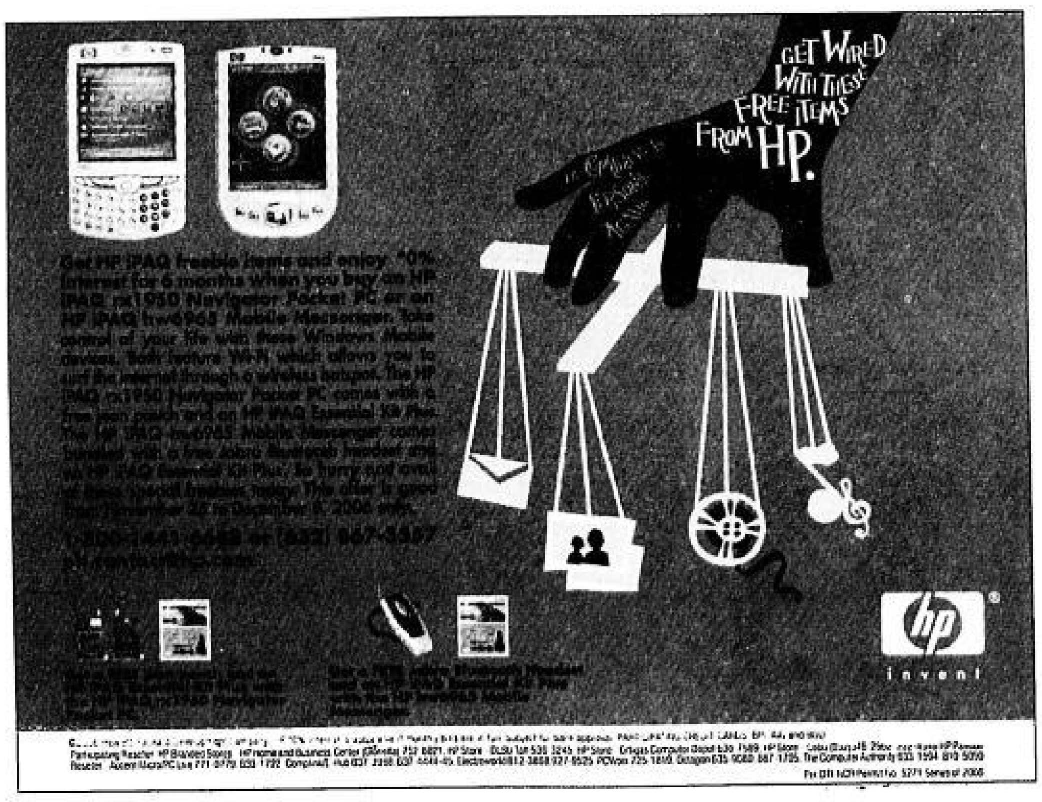


BACCHUS owner Alex Lichaytoo with pretty Pia Villanueva



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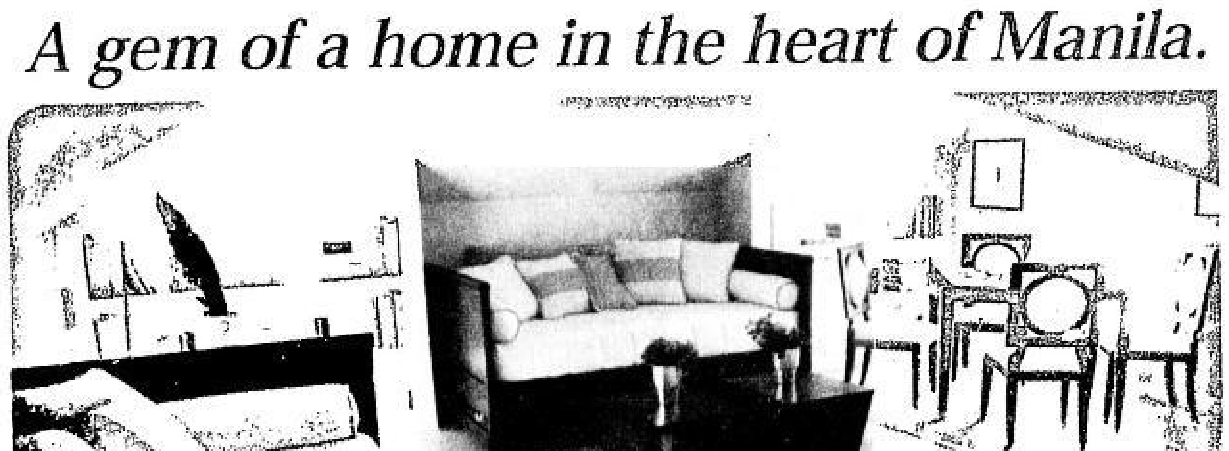

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NICOLE KIDMAN

REESE WITHERSPOON

Top money makers

LOS ANGELES—OSCAR-WINNER Nicole Kidman has become the best-paid actress in Hollywood, fetching $17 million per movie, according to Hollywood Reporter's annual list released this week.

The Australian beauty dethroned last year's top money-maker, American actress Julia Roberts who, for the first time in the Hollywood Reporter list's five-year history, did not make the ranking as she has dedicated much of her time lately to raising her twins.

But Kidman, 39, who won an Oscar for playing writer Virginia Woolf in "The Hours," was unable to match the feat of Roberts, who earned $20 million per movie in her busier years.

Reese Witherspoon, a fellow Oscar laureate, took second place this year with $15 million per flick, the trade publication said.

Renee Zellweger, star of "Bridget Jones's Diary," was in third place in this year's list, also with S15 million.

"Charlie's Angels" co-stars Drew Barrymore and Cameron Diaz were in fourth and fifth place, respectively, both scoring $15 million for each movie as well.

Two more Oscar winners, American beauty Halle Berry of "Monster's Ball" earned $14 million per movie and South African actress Charlize Theron of "Monster" earned $10 million.

Angelina Jolie was in eighth spot with $10 million, followed by Kirsten Dunst with between $8 million and $10 million, and Jennifer Aniston with $8 million dollars. *AFP*

'Kubrador' seals deal with French firm

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

MLR FILMS HAS SIGNED AN "EXCLUSIVE five-year" deal with the Paris-based firm Wide Management to distribute Jeffrey Jeturian's "Kubrador" in Europe and Africa.

The news was relayed to INQUIRER Entertainment by Joji Alonso, "Kubrador" producer.

The contract covers theatrical, as well as ancillary or DVD and cable, rights, said Alonso. "For North America, Wide only holds nonexclusive rights. That means Wide can get commissions for every sale they make and that we can still sell our film in US and Canada."

Wide Management is the same French company that picked up another award-winning Filipino digital movie, "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros," for distribution in Europe.

According to its Web site, Wide's catalogue includes vintage French films by Jean-Luc Godard ("My Life to Live"), Max Ophuls ("Lola Montes"), Jean Renoir ("The Bitch") and Henri-Georges Cluzot ("Manon"), as well as contemporary titles from world cinema, including Senegal's "Moolade," India's "Barbed Wire," France-Canada's "Dreams of Dust," among others.

It was earlier reported that MLR was set to ink a deal with a bigger firm, Cinemavault Releasing International, which boasts Cannes and Hawaii film fest winners in its library.

"But Cinevault's offer was for 25 years, which was too long," Alonso said. The contract with Wide is for five years, with the option to renew for another five years.

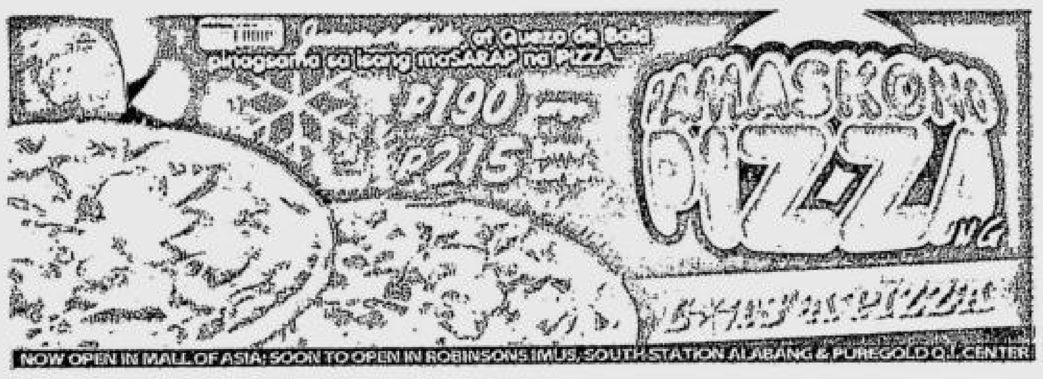
"I also felt that a smaller company like Wide can take better care of our film. Wide's plan is to go theatrical first, which is also our priority," she explained.

Alonso recalled that among the 10 international companies she had previously communicated with, two expressed interest with dispatch and one of these was Wide, through Loic Magneron and Agathe Valentin who requested for a screener.

"After watching the review copy, Agathe e-

KUBRADOR/ F2

GINA Pareño shows off her Best Actress trophy in Amiens.



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IN BRUSSELS: Festival director Robert Malengreau, jury head Sylvia Feng, Pareño and Jeturian

'Kubrador' seals deal with French firm

From page F1

mailed back, expressing how much she loved the movie. She then sent their mandate/proposal," said Alonso.

Negotiations started in October this year.

Alonso admitted that she went through the contract with a fine-toothed comb, putting to good use her training as a lawyer. "I read every word, including the fine print, and made sure we are amply protected. In early November, (fellow lawyer and MLR producer) Roger Rayala and I met with Agathe and Matteo Lovadina in Wide's Paris office and negotiated better terms," she related.

The entire process of looking for an international distributor was an eye-opener for Alonso. "I learned a lot," she quipped. "[For example, that] a local indie producer should be proactive. You can't wait for distributors to come to you. You have to send out e-mails and screeners."

She also pointed out that producers from third world countries are vulnerable to exploitation. "Other distributors may try to put one over you."

She said that the participation of "Kubrador" in major festivals like Toronto, Pusan and Rotterdam beefed up its portfolio. It has accepted invitations to at least 37 festivals and won eight international awards so far, including three Best Actress trophies for lead star Gina Pareño—from New Delhi, Brussels and Amiens.

"Sadly, it also made me realize that films like 'Kubrador' are more appreciated abroad," Alonso said. "Perhaps it will take a barrage of movies before the local audience will become more open to films like ours."

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3 CASINO ROYALE
1:10, 4:20, 7:30, 10:40
PG-13

4 THE RETURN
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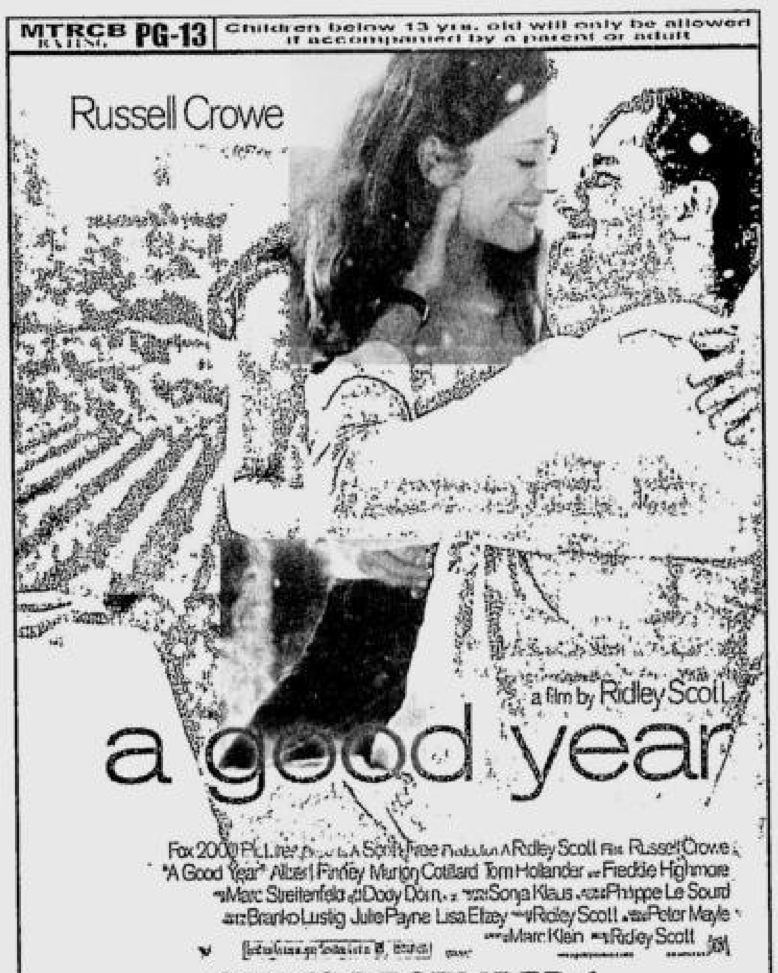
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OPENS DECEMBER 6

Viewer power in action

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Commercial TV operates according to numbers

SOME DAYS AGO, THE CONSISTENTLY controversial **O.J. Simpson** announced that he was coming out with a book and a Fox TV special that would reveal how he would have killed his wife **Nicole Brown Simpson** and her lover **Ron Goldman**—*if* he was indeed the killer (he stood trial and was acquitted).

Huh? Why was O.J. pulling this latest and most bizarre stunt? Some people speculated that he was doing it because he missed being in the limelight, and because he stood to earn millions of dollars from it, which would go to his children's educational trust fund.

A noble goal, but O.J.'s way of achieving it was decidedly dicey, and as far as most people were concerned, completely unacceptable.

As a result, some TV stations decided not to carry the special, and the majority of viewers polled refused to watch the program when it aired on Fox.

In the light of this scathing pre-telecast reaction and stern display of viewer power, Fox executives decided not to push through with the heavily-criticized special's telecast. How's that for viewer power in action?

We trust that this lesson is not lost on Filipino viewers and TV people. All too often, viewers here are passive and feel they are powerless in shaping the programming they get on television. For their part, some of our TV people take this passivity and helplessness as "permission" for them to do their worst, laziest and most irresponsible work.

Many people want local TV to improve by heaps and bounds, but for this to happen, viewers have to collectively exercise their power to make those radical changes.

All they have to do is remind themselves that commercial TV operates according to numbers: The shows that get the most viewers score the highest ratings, and high ratings attract the most enthusiastic and generous support from advertisers, who want their commercials to reach as many viewers as possible.

If enough dissatisfied viewers criticize or choose not to support an errant show, advertisers would shy away from it, and the irresponsible program would be compelled to shape up or ship out.

This is not a pipe dream, as O.J.'s latest fracas has proven. So, TV people should perform more responsibly out of their own volition, before their audience uses its Viewer Power to force their hand.

Dulce and Otoniel

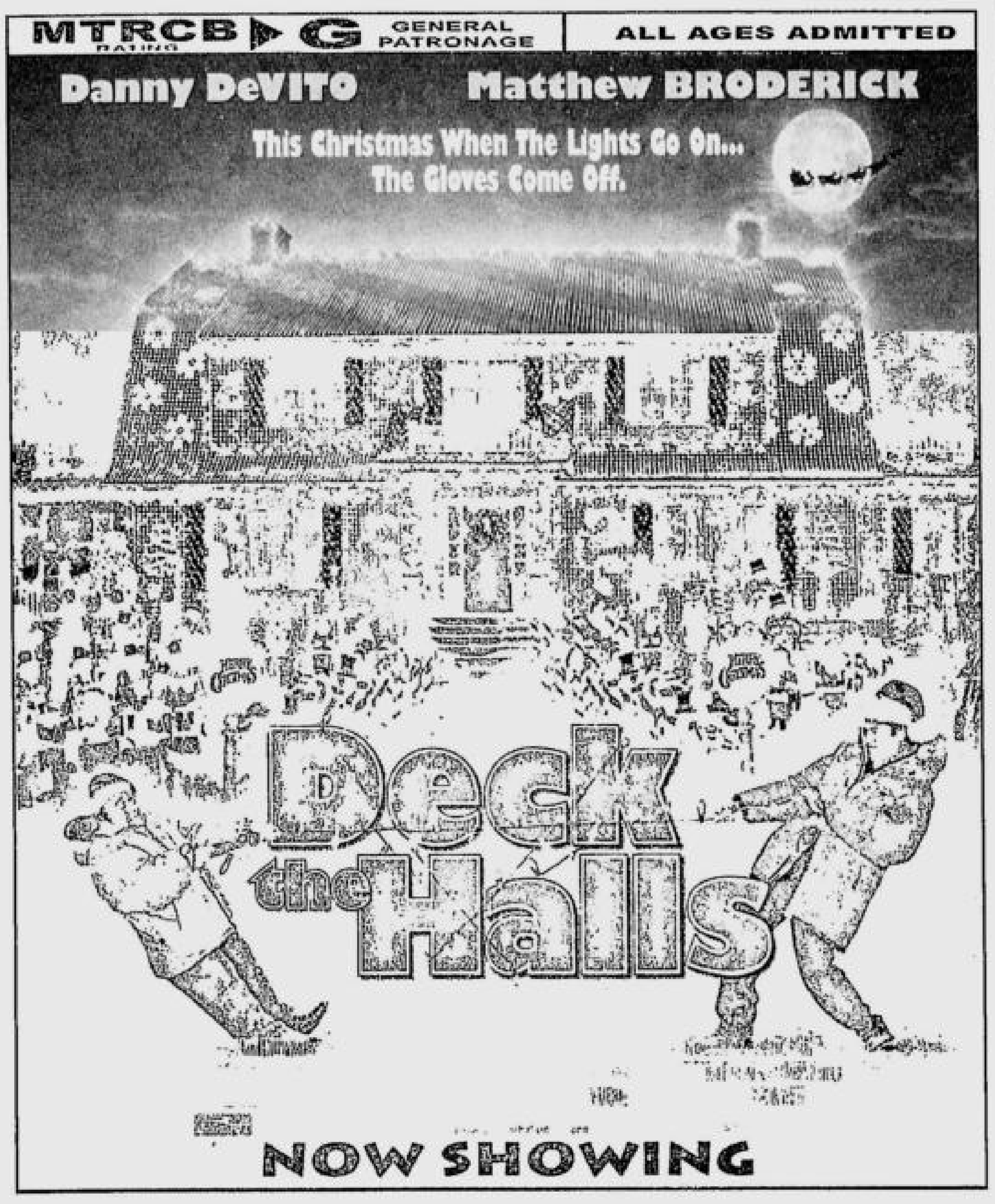
Dulce and **Otoniel Gonzaga** will perform in a gala concert on Dec. 9 at the Philamlife Theater. Dulce will reprise the songs "Memory" (from "Cats"), "I Dreamed A Dream" ("Les Miserables") and "With One Look" ("Sunset Boulevard"), and Dulce and Otoniel will both sing "The Prayer." Other perfoming artists are **Rachelle Gerodias**, **Camille Lopez-Molina** and flutist **Christopher Oracion**. Call 900-7023.

'Inang Yaya'

Maricel Soriano's new starrer, "Inang Yaya," is now on the first week of its Metro run. The Unitel project is the first full-length feature directed by **Pablo Biglang-Awa**, and is scripted by **Veronica B. Velasco**. It introduces two gifted child actresses, **Tata Santos** and **Erika Oreta**.

'Come to the Stable'

Sinag Tala presents "Come to the Stable" at 4 p.m. today at the Church of the Holy Trinity, 48 McKinley Rd., North Forbes Park, Makati. The annual gathering of Sinag Tala friends, families and supporters is highlighted by a concert to raise awareness and funds for Ang Arko ng Pilipinas, a home for physically and mentally challenged children in Cainta, and for The Learning Tree's Angklung & Philippine Indigenous Music Instruments Ensembles, plus five Higaonon youths from Davao, so they can return to school.



MTRCB RATING G GENERAL PATRONAGE
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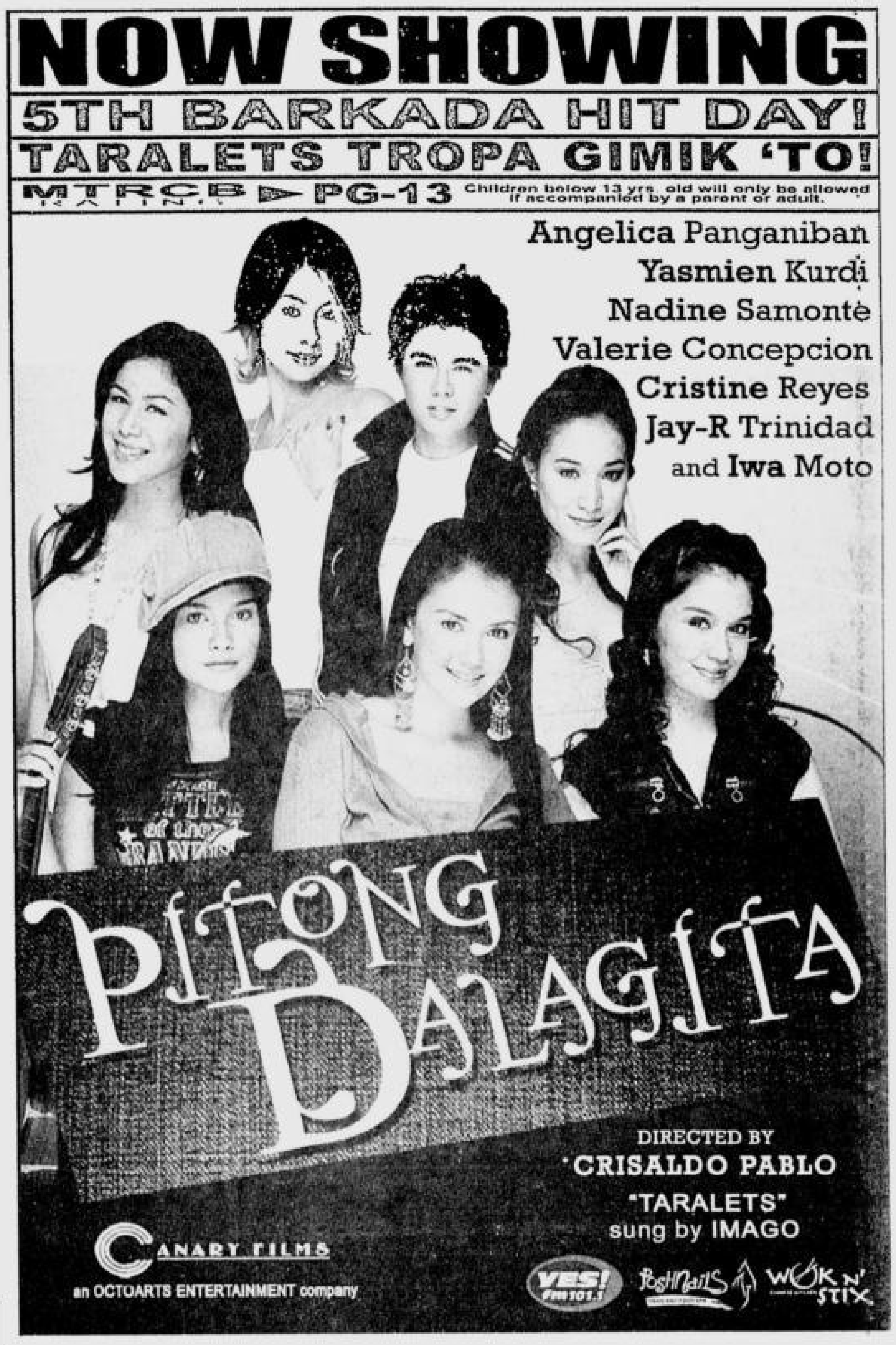
Danny DeVITO Matthew BRODERICK
This Christmas When The Lights Go On... The Gloves Come Off.
Deck the Halls
NOW SHOWING



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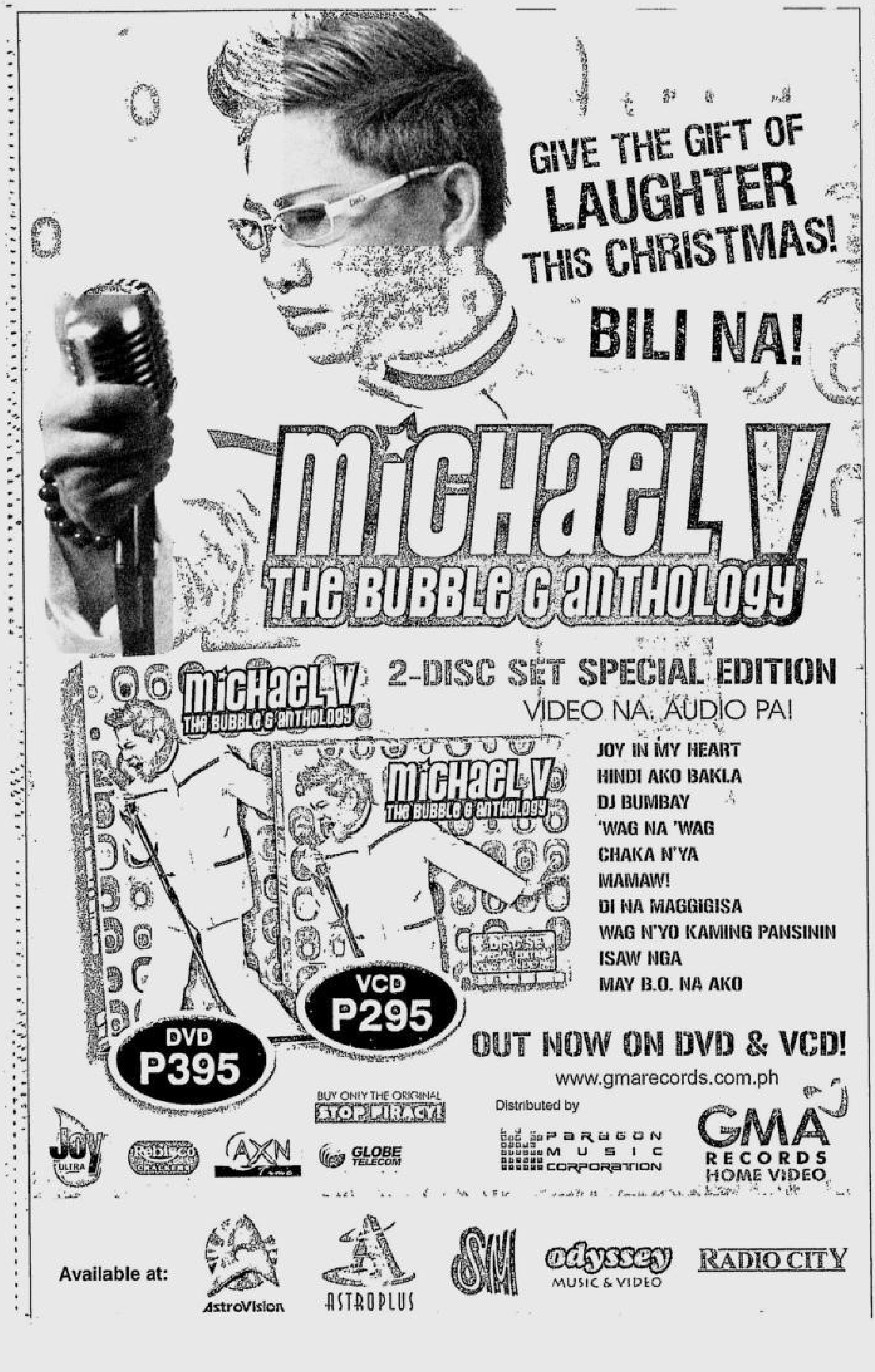
5TH BARKADA HIT DAY!
TARALETS TROPA GIMIK 'TO!
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
Angelica Panganiban
Yasmien Kurdi
Nadine Samonte
Valerie Concepcion
Cristine Reyes
Jay-R Trinidad
and Iwa Moto
PITONG DALAGITA
DIRECTED BY CRISALDO PABLO
"TARALETS" sung by IMAGO
CANARY FILMS
an OCTOARTS ENTERTAINMENT company



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RARAMPA NA ANG PELIKULANG YAYANIG SA INYONG NGALA-NGALA!
KEANNA REEVES PAOLO CONTIS MELANIE MARQUEZ
EUGENE DOMINGO JAYSON GAINZA FRANZEN FAJARDO BOBBY ANDREWS
DIEGO LLORICO IC MENDOZA BELLIE FLORES
& EDDIE GARCIA
Reyna
Ang Makulay na Pakikipagsapalaran ng mga Achucherva, Achuchuva, Achechenes
DIRECTED BY SOXIE TOPACIO DGPI
OPENS DEC. 6
www.viva.com.ph
VIVA

ROUNDUP

Special screening

"ALL THE KING'S MEN," A COMPELLING POlitical drama, will have a special screening at Gateway Cineplex 10 on Dec. 6.

Based on Robert Penn Warren's 1946 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, the movie tells the story of an idealist's rise to power in the world of Louisiana politics and the corruption that leads to his ultimate downfall.

Written for the screen, directed and produced by Steven Zaillian, it features Sean Penn, Jude Law, Kate Winslet, James Gandolfini, Mark Ruffalo, Patricia Clarkson and Anthony Hopkins.

SEAN PENN in "All The King's Men"

Free movie cards

CITIBANK Online lets moviegoers enjoy the IMAX movie experience at the SM Mall of Asia for free with an approved online credit card application.

All approved online applications via www.citibank.com.ph until Dec. 31 will receive free IMAX movie cards.

Approved applications for a Citibank Gold MasterCard or Visa, Citibank Cathay Pacific Gold Visa and Mercury Drug-Citibank Gold Visa will receive movie cards worth P600, while new Citibank Classic MasterCard or Visa, Citibank Clear Card and Citibank Cash Back credit cardholders will be entitled to free movie cards worth P300.

Hallmark adventures

PREMIERING on Hallmark Channel on Dec. 10 at 9 p.m. is Jules Verne's "Mysterious Island" directed by Russell Mulcahy.

Kyle MacLachlan plays Captain Cyrus Smith, head of a group of Civil War escapees cast away to a remote island inhabited by bloodthirsty pirates, giant insects and the mad genius Captain Nemo (Patrick Stewart).

Showing from Dec. 11-15, 8 p.m. is Emmy-winning writer Simon Moore adaptation of James Gurney's lavishly illustrated Dinotopia books for television in a five-episode miniseries.

'Mel & Joey' special

"MEL & JOEY" presents the first of a two-part anniversary special taped in Japan tonight after "Hoooo U?" on GMA 7.

To be featured are two Pinays who struggled to become rich and successful as well as a well-respected broadcast journalist and a veteran comedian.

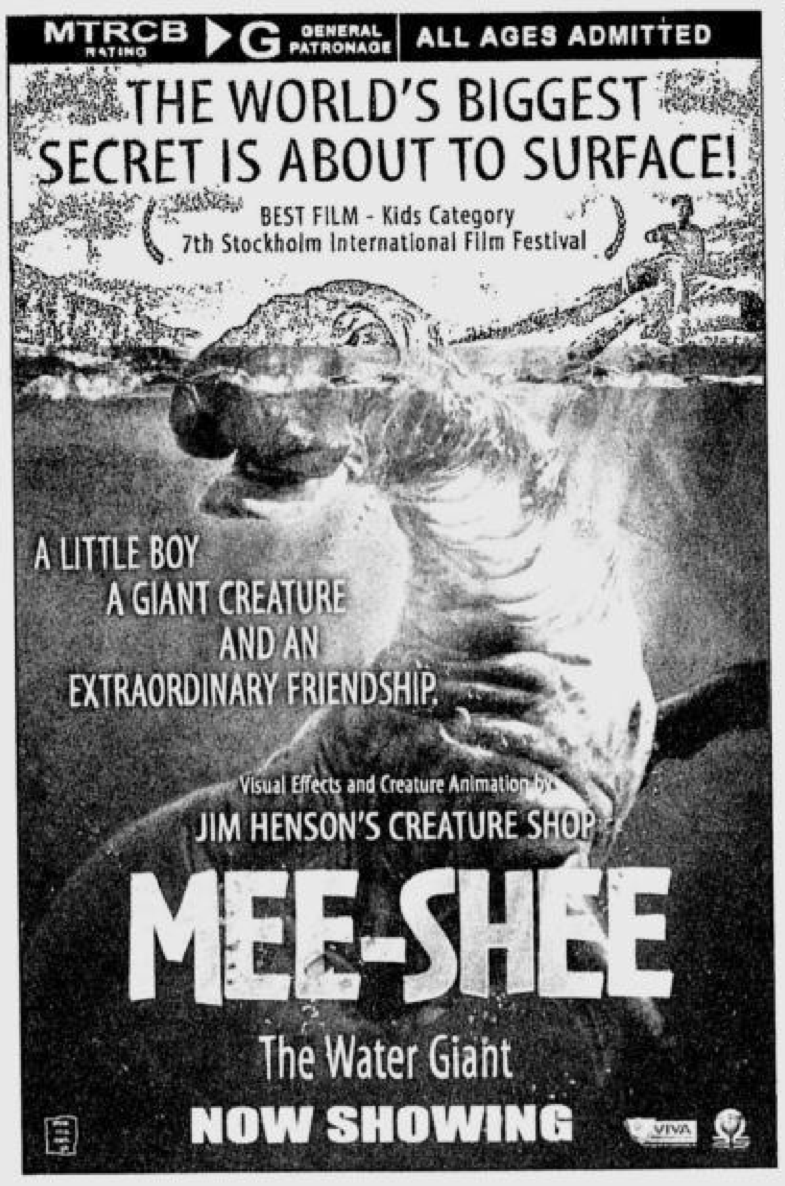
Hello Kitty also welcomes the team of Mel and Joey in Sanrio Land where one can find Hello Kitty's house, car and special bath tub.

Christmas countdown

"SOP" hosts Regine Velasquez, Jaya, Ogie Alcasid and Janno Gibbs will launch the Christmas countdown "Syete Para Sa Pasko" live at Studio 3 of GMA Network at 11:45 a.m.

Those who wish to be part of the audience will be asked to give P7 to Kapuso Foundation for the benefit of less fortunate children.

The segment will run simultaneous with the "SOP Telebabad Pasasalamat Fans Day," which is a whole-day affair with the entire casts of top-rating Kapuso shows like "Captain Barbell," "Atlantika" and "Bakekang."



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AND AN
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MEE SHEE 2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00	INANG YAYA 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	DECK THE HALLS 12:30 / 2:45 / 5:00 / 7:15 / 9:30	Globe PLATINUM CINEMA
THE RETURN 1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50	FRAGILE 12:20 / 2:30 / 6:50 DONSOL 12:45 / 3:00 / 5:15 / 7:30 / 9:45	HAPPY FEET 12:15 / 2:35 / 4:55 / 7:15 / 9:40	
7 DALAGITA 12:20 / 2:30 / 4:40 / 6:50 / 9:00	CASINO ROYALE 1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50	BORAT 4:50 / 9:30	HAPPY FEET 2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00

AliMALL 5

INANG YAYA 11:55 / 2:05 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35	CASINO ROYALE 12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30	HAPPY FEET 1:05 / 3:25 / 5:45 / 8:05
GIGIL 12:05 / 2:10 / 4:15 / 6:20 / 8:25	THE RETURN 12:05 R3 / 1:55 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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THX

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 CASINO ROYALE	2 HAPPY FEET	3 PITONG DALAGITA	4 INANG YAYA			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 THE RETURN	2 INANG YAYA	3 THX CASINO ROYALE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 DECK THE HALLS	5 HAPPY FEET	6 HAPPY FEET	7 BORAT
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 HAPPY FEET	2 DECK THE HALLS					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX CASINO ROYALE GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX HAPPY FEET GUARANTEED SEATS	3 DECK THE HALLS GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BORAT GUARANTEED SEATS	5 THE RETURN GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX HAPPY FEET GUARANTEED SEATS	2 DECK THE HALLS	3 CASINO ROYALE	4 MARIE ANTOINETTE	5 THE RETURN		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 HAPPY FEET	2 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS	3 INANG YAYA	4 CASINO ROYALE			
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 DECK THE HALLS	2 INANG YAYA	3 CASINO ROYALE	4 PITONG DALAGITA	5 THE RETURN		

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Dec 9 - 11am, 3pm, 6pm
Dec 10 - 11am, 3pm, 6pm
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November 25-26, 2006
Nov 25 - 2pm, 6pm
Nov 26 - 2pm, 6pm
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December 1-3, 2006
Dec 1 - 11am, 3pm, 6pm
Dec 2 - 11am, 3pm, 6pm
Dec 3 - 11am, 3pm, 6pm
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AYALA CENTER CEBU
November 17-19, 2006
Nov 17 - 4pm, 6:30pm
Nov 18 - 11am, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm
Nov. 19 - 11am, 3pm, 6:30pm
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Good timing helps win Oscars

LOS ANGELES—TIMING ISN'T EVERYTHING when it comes to the Academy Awards—but it helps.

Two big fall films—Martin Scorsese's "The Departed" and Clint Eastwood's "Flags of Our Fathers"—are bookends for the benefits and hazards of releasing acclaimed films early in awards season, when they could either get a jump on front-runner status or be forgotten come Oscar time.

Driven by glowing reviews and word-of-mouth that it's a return to Scorsese's old mobster form, "The Departed" opened the first week in October and has shot past $100 million at the box office, becoming the director's biggest hit ever.

The World War II Iwo Jima saga "Flags of Our Fathers" followed two weeks later with similarly positive reviews. But it opened with modest audiences and has limped to a $33 million return, about a third of the eventual haul of Eastwood's last two movies, Best Picture nominee "Mystic River" and Best Picture winner "Million Dollar Baby."

Two months into its run, "The Departed" still draws fair-sized crowds, coming in at No. 15 on last weekend's box-office chart. "Flags of Our Father's" has dropped out of the top 20.

Noble failure

Not that box-office receipts are or should be a gauge for a film's Oscar merits. But everybody likes to back a winner, Oscar voters included.

As good and ambitious a film as it is, "Flags of Our Fathers" now has the stench of a noble failure. Why audiences largely have passed on the film is a puzzle, though perhaps its grim, realistic combat footage is too painful a reminder of the military quagmire in Iraq.

"Mystic River" and "Million Dollar Baby" debuted in limited release in December and rode a wave of accolades into wider release as Oscar season heated up. Would "Flags of Our Fathers" have fared better following the same release pattern? We'll never know.

On the other hand, "The Departed" cruises toward the Oscar nominations Jan. 23 looking like a movie that's in for the long haul.

Throughout the year, Hollywood execs brood over the best time to release their films to maximize commercial prospects. Decisions over timing are especially tough late in the year, when studios release their prestige films, adult-oriented dramas whose financial fortunes may climb or crash depending on how the movies fare in the Oscar derby.

Best-picture nominations and wins can extend the shelf life of a movie in theaters for weeks or even months, adding tens of millions of dollars to its final take. The trouble is: Everyone's chasing the same dollars and awards, leaving theaters overloaded with films that people do not have time to see.

> It's the last-shall-be-first philosophy for the Academy

The deluge is at its worst in December, the month that conventional wisdom dictates is prime time to release awards contenders.

It's the last-shall-be-first philosophy, the notion that the 5,800 members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences have short attention spans and will not recollect anything they saw way back in September, October or November when it comes time to cast Oscar ballots. *AP*

SHANG CINEPLEX

① HAPPY FEET
MTRCB: GP
1:30, 4:10, 7:10, 9:50

② CASINO ROYALE
MTRCB: PG-13
12:55, 4:00, 7:05, 10:10

③ HAPPY FEET
MTRCB: GP 2:00, 4:40
THE RETURN
MTRCB: PG-13 7:45, 10:00

④ DECK THE HALLS
MTRCB: GP
12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE
RIDING ALONE
MTRCB: GP
12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

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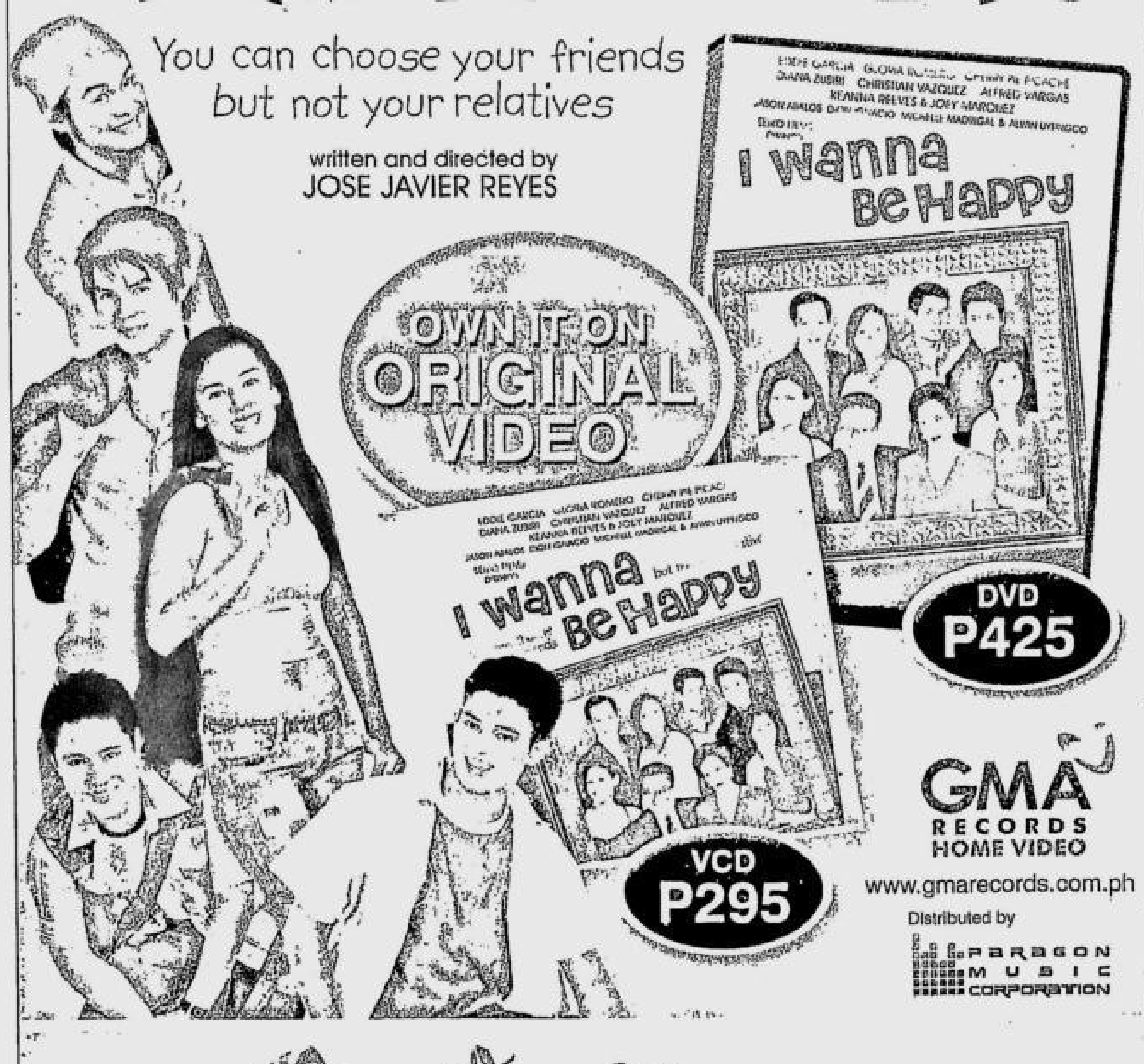
MEE - SHEE: THE GIANT WATER G 12:45,2:55,5:05,7:15	HAPPY FEET G 12:55,3:15,5:35,7:55	DECK THE HALLS G 11:35,1:45,3:55,6:05,8:15
HAPPY FEET G 11:05,1:25,3:45,6:05,8:25	THE RETURN PG13 12:00,2:00,4:00 BORAT R18 6:00,8:00	CASINO ROYALE 007 PG13 1:35,4:30,7:25,10:20

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-144041



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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 CASINO ROYALE • THX
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00
2 INANG YAYA
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
3 THE RETURN
1:25 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
4 DECK THE HALLS
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50
5 HAPPY FEET
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
6 Reserved for
VICTORY CHURCH FELLOWSHIP
7 PITONG DALAGITA
1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00
8 BORAT
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50
9 DONSOL
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
10 MEE-SHEE
12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00

ERMITA 636-7809 to 12

1 HAPPY FEET
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:25 10:00
2 DECK THE HALLS
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
3 THE RETURN
12:10 2:10 4:10 6:10 8:10 10:00
4 PITONG DALAGITA
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
5 MEE-SHEE
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 9:50
6 INANG YAYA
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
7 CASINO ROYALE
11:00 1:40 4:20 7:00 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 MEE-SHEE
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
2 HAPPY FEET
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05
3 INANG YAYA
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10
4 THE RETURN
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
5 CASINO ROYALE
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00
6 PITONG DALAGITA
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
7 DECK THE HALLS
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
8 DONSOL
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

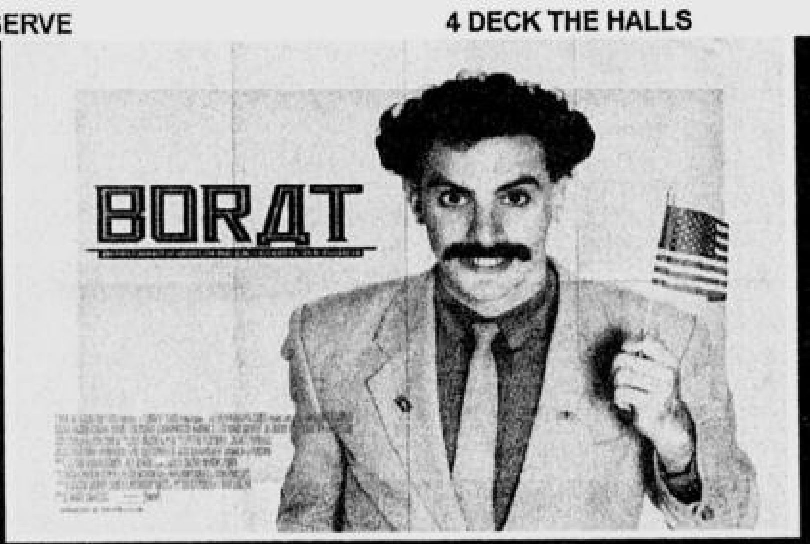
1 HAPPY FEET
2 INANG YAYA
3 DECK THE HALLS
4 PITONG DALAGITA
5 CASINO ROYALE

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 PITONG DALAGITA
2 INANG YAYA
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 THE RETURN
2 HAPPY FEET
3 INANG YAYA
4 DECK THE HALLS



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1 CASINO ROYALE
2 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
3 INANG YAYA
4 HAPPY FEET

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 THE MARINE
2 INANG YAYA
3 BOA
4 GIGIL

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 PITONG DALAGITA
2 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
3 INANG YAYA
4 HAPPY FEET

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
2 INANG YAYA
3 ANG PAMANA: THE INHERITANCE
4 FEAST

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 PITONG DALAGITA
2 HAPPY FEET
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 INANG YAYA

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

1 HAPPY FEET
2 PITONG DALAGITA
3 INANG YAYA
4 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
6 CASINO ROYALE

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHER
2 HAPPY FEET
3 INANG YAYA
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 THE MARINE
6 GIGIL

ILOILO (033) 336-8076

1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
2 INANG YAYA
3 BOA
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 HAPPY FEET

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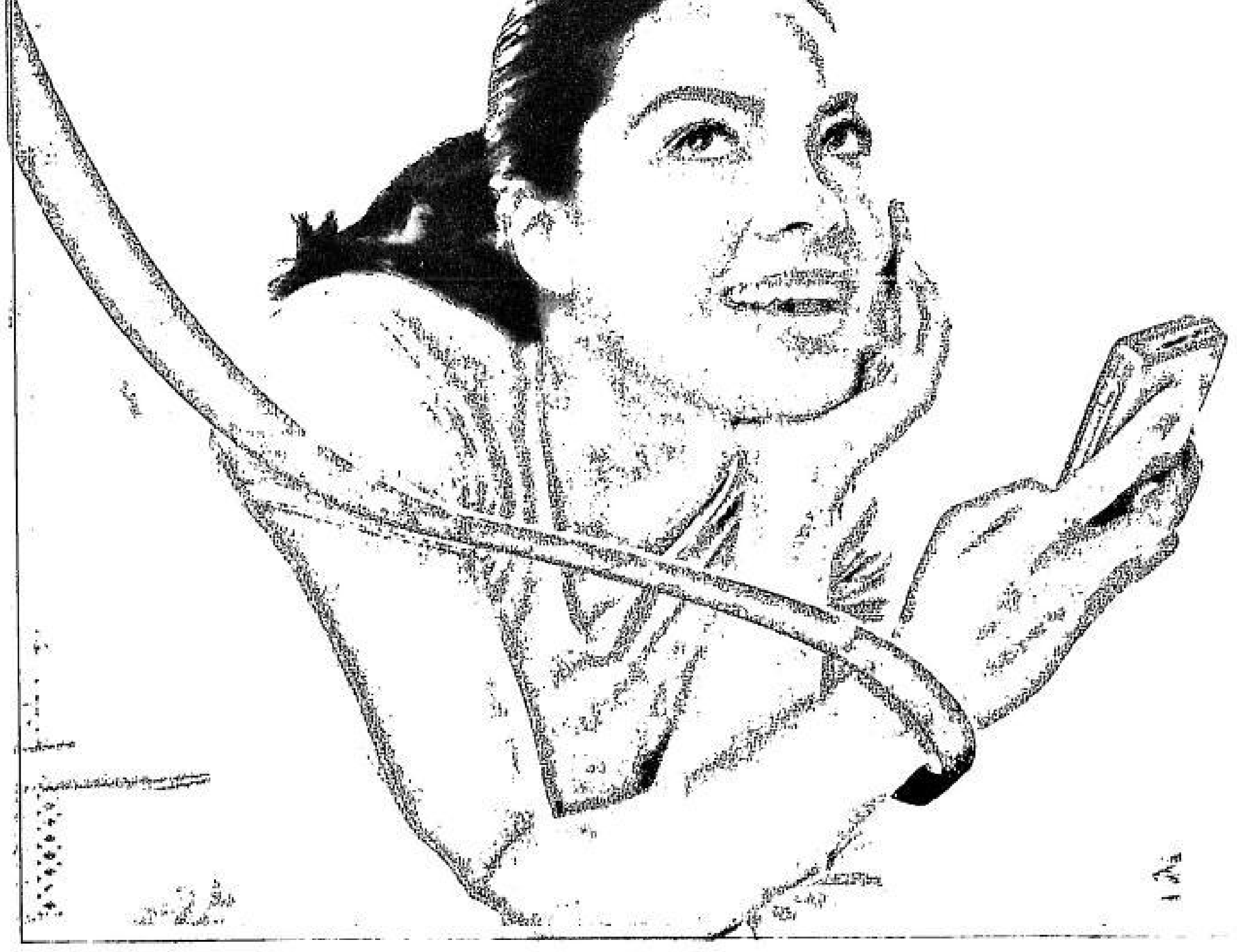

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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Watch out, Manny Pacquiao—Rocky Balboa is back

…party-time with the man behind Borat—high five!

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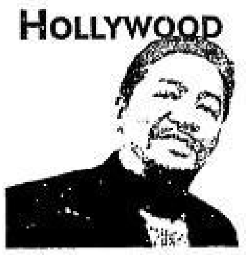


Ruben V. Nepales

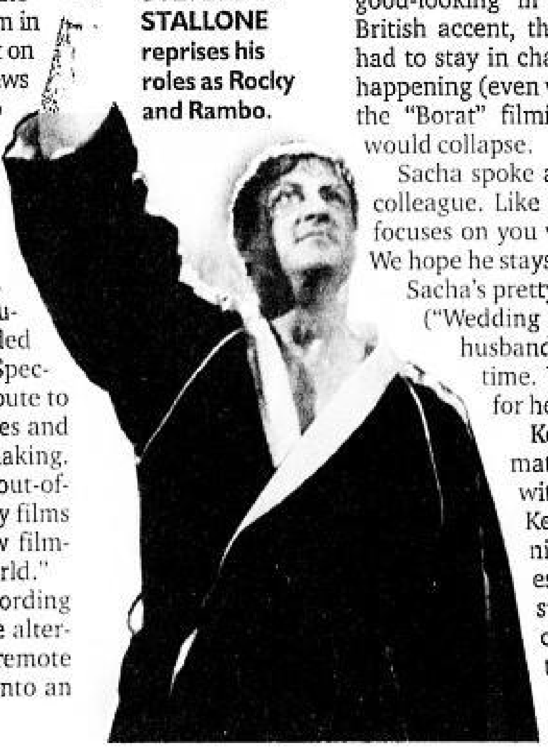
LOS ANGELES—AURAEUS SOLITO E-mailed us from Thailand to share his reaction on being nominated to the 2007 Independent Spirit Awards.

"Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros (The Blossoming of Maximo Oliveros)" is one of the five nominees in the foreign film category, which is awarded to the director in the indie film world's version of the Oscars. "I got the news through a text," Auraeus wrote. "I am in Phuket, Thailand, for my fellowship report on Okinawan rituals. Magically, I got the news just before my report, so my energy was so high and my docu-report was great!"

We congratulate Auraeus, producer **Raymond Lee**, scriptwriter **Michiko Yamamoto** and the cast led by **Nathan Lopez** and **JR Valentin** for the incredible journey that "Maxi" has taken them.

There's more good news about Auraeus. The filmmaker's "Tuli" is included in the 2007 Sundance Film Festival's Spectrum, which the fest describes as "a tribute to the abundance of compelling new voices and the creative spirit in independent filmmaking. The Spectrum program presents 24 out-of-competition dramatic and documentary films from some of the most promising new filmmakers from the US and around the world."

Written by **Jimmy Flores**, "Tuli," according to a Sundance statement, is "about the alternate life created by a young girl from a remote Philippines village after being forced into an arranged marriage."



SYLVESTER STALLONE reprises his roles as Rocky and Rambo.

Man behind Borat

We finally met the man behind Borat Sagdiyev last Wednesday evening.

Fox Filmed Entertainment hosted a reception to toast the success of "Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan" at the home of **Ann** and **Jim Gianopulos**, who is co-chair of the studio that released 2006's surprise runaway comedy hit.

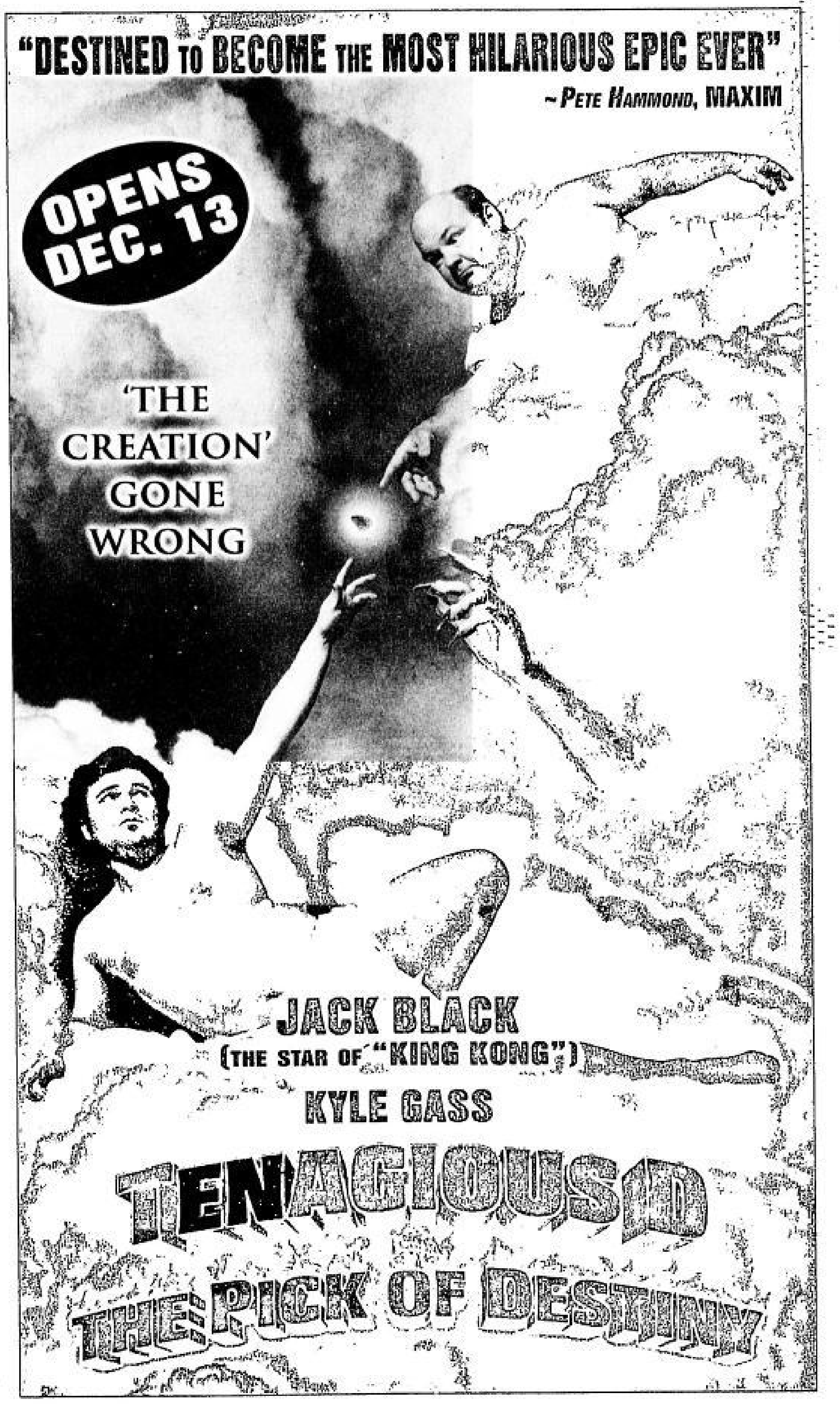
Appearing as himself this time (he was in character when we interviewed him last October), **Sacha Baron Cohen**, minus his alter ego's trademark mustache, was congratulated left and right by guests. He's actually quite good-looking in person. Speaking with a British accent, the satiric genius told us he had to stay in character no matter what was happening (even when the cops came) during the "Borat" filming or else the whole act would collapse.

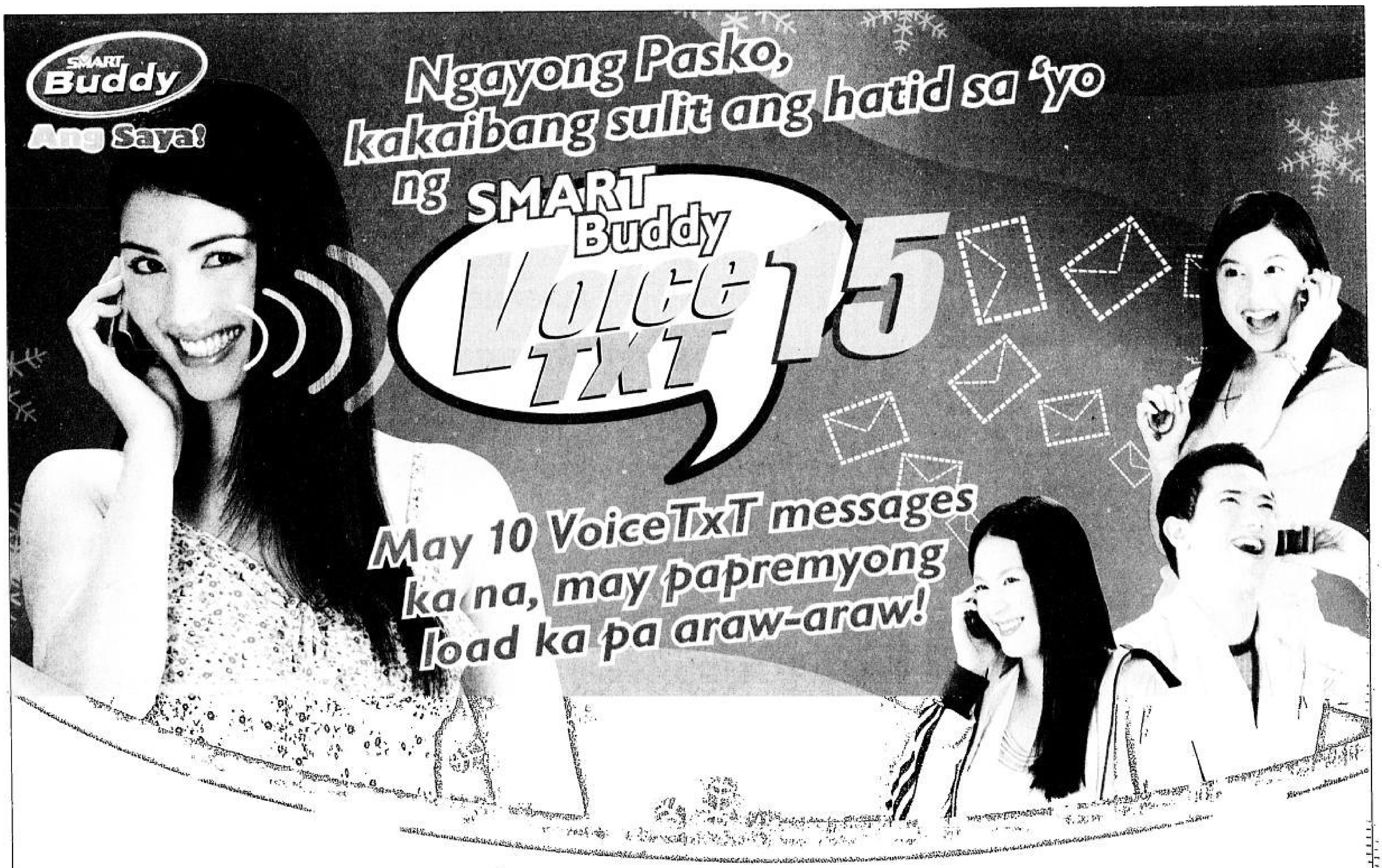
Sacha spoke a few Chinese words to our colleague. Like **George Clooney**, he really focuses on you when you're talking to him. We hope he stays this way.

Sacha's pretty fiancée, actress **Isla Fisher** ("Wedding Crashers"), said that her husband-to-be is not "on" all the time. We were glad to hear that, for her sake.

Ken Davitian, who plays Azamat, Borat's producer, came with his wife. When we asked Ken, whose heritage is Armenian, what has been his funniest experience so far since the success of the movie, he recounted an incident right after the American Music

ROCKY/ G3


"DESTINED TO BECOME THE MOST HILARIOUS EPIC EVER"
~PETE HAMMOND, MAXIM
OPENS DEC. 13
'THE CREATION' GONE WRONG
JACK BLACK
(THE STAR OF "KING KONG")
KYLE GASS
TENACIOUS D
THE PICK OF DESTINY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DAHIL SMART TAYO

Britney Spears ditches her panties

BRITNEY SPEARS

LOS ANGELES—HER NECKLINES have plunged, she's plying the all-night party circuit with new best pal Paris Hilton, and she has even ditched her panties.

As if to prove, as she once sang, that she really is "not that innocent," newly separated pop star and mother of two Britney Spears is letting it all hang out—shocking her fans, causing concern among friends and making herself the butt of jokes on late-night TV.

"Girls Gone Wild!" Us Weekly magazine blared in its cover story this week, charting a manic two weeks in which Spears was seen gambling all night in Las Vegas, spent time nightclubbing and shopping with "celebutante" Hilton, and was photographed on several occasions climbing in and out of cars without panties.

The latest media frenzy over Spears comes two years after she put her recording career on hold for motherhood and three weeks after filing for divorce from husband Kevin Federline.

"Lately, I hear things and see things, and I'm just wondering, 'Girl, what is up?' Please stop acting like someone you're not. Wear underwear!" pleaded one longtime fan on Spears' website on Thursday.

Talk-show host Rosie O'Donnell, who has jokingly offered to adopt Spears and her two baby sons, on Thursday offered her a gift—a pair of red panties inscribed "No Peeking."

But celebrity watchers say the singer, who shot to fame with her debut 1998 single, "... Baby One More Time," and the accompanying video in which she dressed provocatively in a Catholic schoolgirl's uniform, appears to be enjoying the limelight.

RUSHES

PARIS HILTON

"Britney is succeeding in getting us to talk about her. From the beginning, Britney has made her career out of shocking us, and she ultimately will win because of it," Ken Baker, West Coast editor for Us Weekly, told Reuters.

With Federline—now dubbed Fed-Ex by the tabloid media—out of the picture, Spears has been inseparable from Hilton for the past two weeks.

On one occasion, Spears and the hotel heiress split a pair of fishnet stockings and each wore a leg. On another, they wore coordinated leopard-skin outfits — Spears wearing a thigh-hugging, cleavage-baring mini-dress.

Spears, who turns 25 on Saturday, was seen this week shopping for thongs and corsets at a Hollywood lingerie boutique. Celebrity website TMZ.com said she spent more than $3,000 at the store. But the following day, she was photographed again—in another open-leg crotch shot. *Reuters*

Busy, busy

GEORGE CLOONEY

LOS ANGELES—One-time "ER" heartthrob George Clooney, now a Hollywood "A-list" actor and sought-after director, has signed on to two films, "The Belmont Boys" and "White Jazz," local press reported Thursday.

After his success directing "Good Night, And Good Luck," he has signed on to direct "The Belmont Boys," a film about an attempted robbery and the seven would-be thieves meeting 30 years later to finish the job.

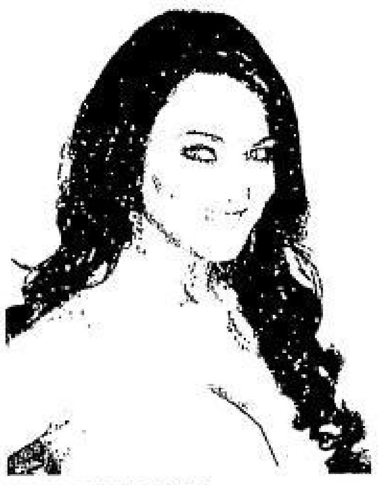
He will work with writers of "Ocean's Thirteen," in which he played Danny Ocean, and with the film's producer, Jerry Weintraub, according to the entertainment industry newspaper Variety.

But first, Clooney will star in "White Jazz," a Warner Independent Pictures adaptation of a novel by James Ellroy. He will play a dirty Los Angeles vice squad cop.

He is to do both films in 2008.

Next, he is slated to direct and play opposite Renee Zellweger in "Leatherheads" for Universal. The romantic comedy is set in the 1920s. *AFP*

Lohan fires back



LINDSAY LOHAN

LOS ANGELES—Actress Lindsay Lohan's publicist fired back at the media on Thursday, saying journalists had crossed a line by mocking a heartfelt letter the screen star wrote following director Robert Altman's death last week.

Spokeswoman Leslie Sloane said the note—which one columnist suggested was composed by Lohan on "one of her legendary party benders"—was instead dashed off by the distraught 20-year-old actress on a Blackberry, moments after she learned Altman had died.

KATE WINSLET and husband Sam Mendes at the New York opening of playwright David Hare's "The Vertical Hour." REUTERS

Altman, who died on Nov. 20 at age 81, directed Lohan in the last film of his career, "A Prairie Home Companion."

"When I got the reports that he had died, I reached Lindsay on her cell phone, and she had no idea. She was devastated. She started crying," Sloane told Reuters. "She quickly put something together on her Blackberry."

"Here was a girl who found something special in this man that she felt so close to," Sloane said. "And she was completely shocked and blown away that he just died. It was written very quickly and it was from the heart."

Lohan titled her Nov. 21 e-mail "Dead is hard, Life is much easier," a quote she attributes to actor Jack Nicholson. In it, she sent condolences to Altman's family, adding, "I feel as I've just had the wind knocked out of me."

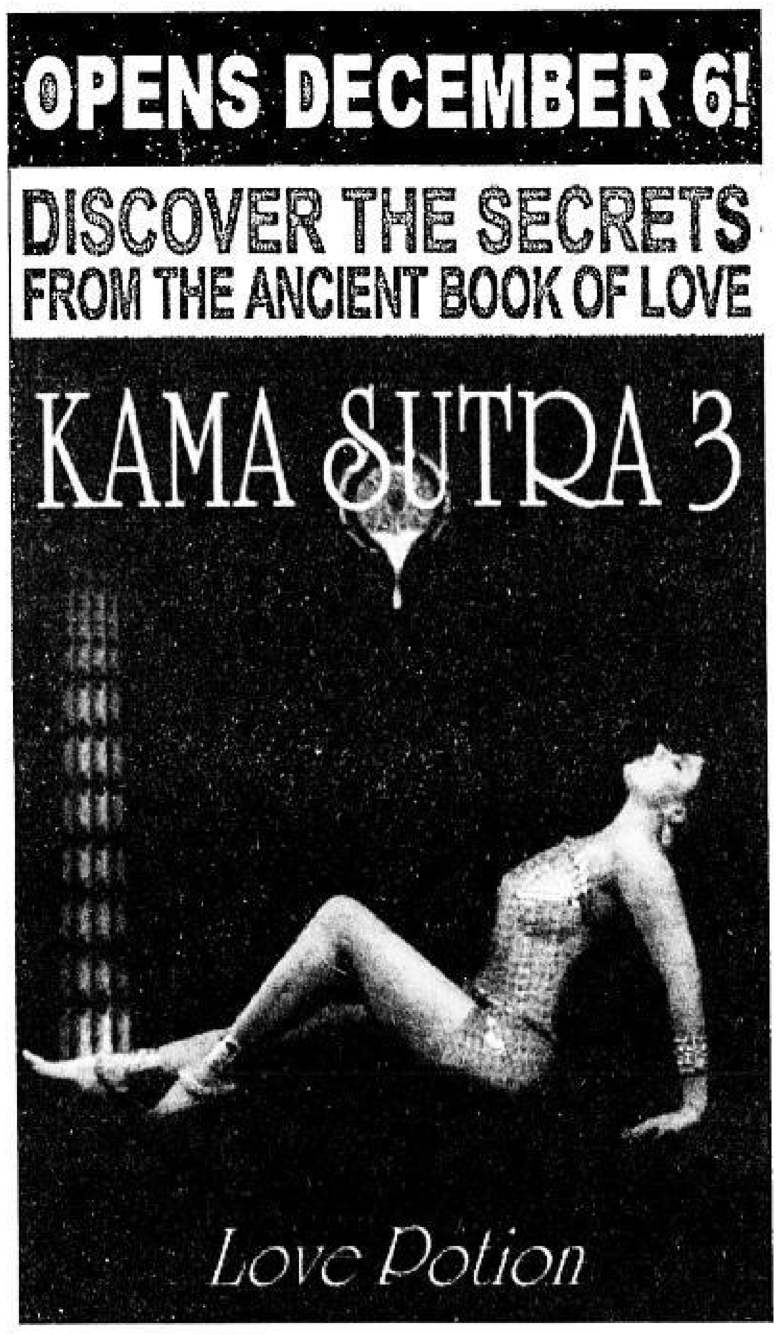
The film star, who is famously estranged from her father, also describes Altman as "the closest thing to my father and grandfather that I really do believe I've had in several years."

SEAN LENNON at the NY performance of Rachel Fuller's "In The Attic" at Joe's Pub. AFP

Days after the missive was made public, Los Angeles Times columnist Patt Morrison ridiculed it on a website as "alarmingly incoherent," apparently referring to misspellings and grammatical errors by Lohan, and wrote that Altman himself might find it "comedic."

Andrew Gumbel wrote in the London Independent that the letter, which ends with the odd sign-off "Be Adequite," had become the talk of Hollywood.

"Was the actress on a misguided—and utterly botched—quest for publicity, exploiting the death of a revered director for her own purposes?" Gumbel wrote. "Had she been on one of her legendary party benders? Or was this Exhibit A for the indictment of America's education system?" *Reuters*



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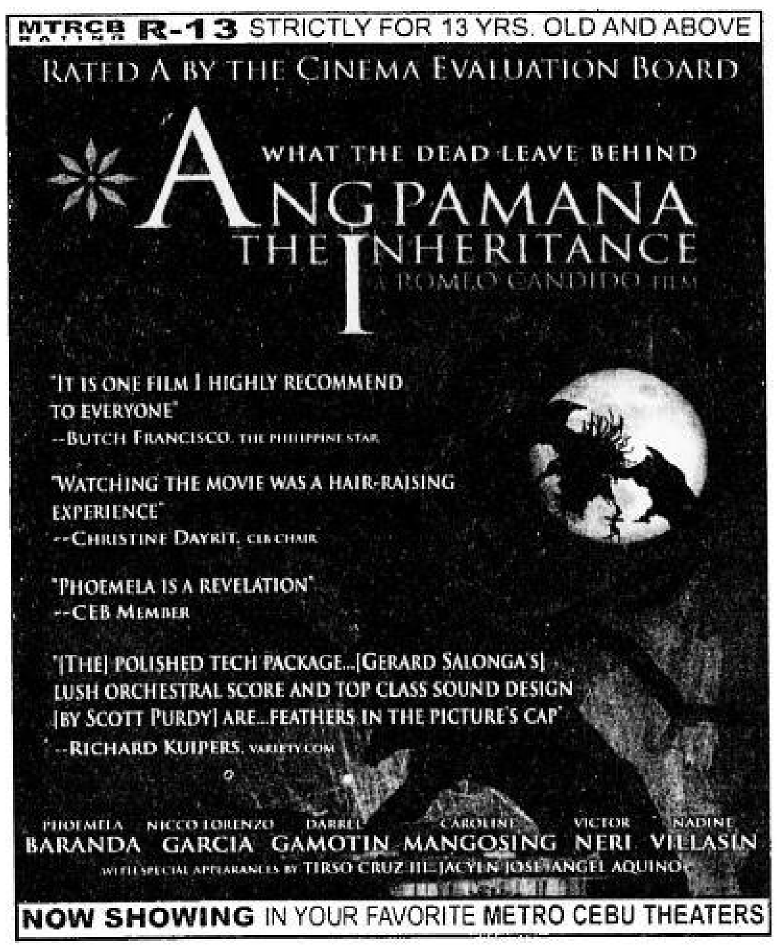

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SARAH MICHELLE GELLAR
THE RETURN

Watch out, Manny Pacquiao—Rocky Balboa is back

From page G1

Awards. A female motorist recognized him as he rode in the back of a limo. "I've seen you naked!" exclaimed the lady. Ken and Sacha's nude wrestling is one of the film's "memorable" scenes.

"Borat" made us search for our DVD copy of Sacha's "Da Ali G" show where he first played the Kazakh journalist; Bruno, the catty fashion TV reporter; and Ali G, a dim-witted British "hip-hop" journalist who thinks he's from the hood (in one episode, former US Attorney General Dick Thornburgh had to explain to him that a "hung jury" has nothing to do with male private parts).

Being tall, **Geena Davis** towered among the guests held in the backyard (it was chilly but gas heaters kept everybody warm) as a quintet of musicians played Kazakh music or what passes to be one.

We were glad to see **Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje** in LA this time, after we interviewed him in Hawaii right before his "Lost" character was killed off. No longer sporting a shaved head, Adewale quipped that he is trying to look "conservative" so he can convince prospective investors to finance his semi-autobiographical movie.

Adewale is going places, literally. When he returns to London, the actor has a luncheon date with no less than Prime Minister **Tony Blair**. He also said that he is visiting Nigeria where he was raised.

When comedian **Garry Shandling** walked in, he headed straight to the fireplace to warm his hands. He explained to us that he walked to the Gianopulos' house since he lived nearby. Other guests included **Jeremy Piven, John C. Reilly, Jon Heder** ("Napoleon Dynamite"), and political pundit and HBO talk show host **Bill Maher**.

At the guest house, we watched scenes that didn't make it to the final version of "Borat." In one of these deleted scenes, a cop who asked Borat to pull over his ice cream truck looked like a Filipino.

On our way out, **Mike White**, who wrote and acted in such acclaimed indie films as **Jennifer Aniston's** "The Good Girl" and "Chuck & Buck," shared the good news that his directorial debut "Year of the Dog," which stars **Laura Dern** and **Peter Sarsgaard**, will be shown in the 2007 Sundance Film Festival.

> There may still be some box-office life left for this famous film champ

'Rocky, 6'

When news came out that **Sylvester Stallone** was not only making another "Rocky" movie—he was also doing an nth "Rambo" flick, many people were incredulous, exclaiming "What!?"

But now a friend just told me that when he watched a movie and a trailer of "Rocky Balboa," the sixth installment in the series, came on, the movie house crowd broke into applause and cheers. At 60, Sylvester may prove his detractors wrong—there may still be some box-office life to be flogged out of his famous

ROCKY/ G4

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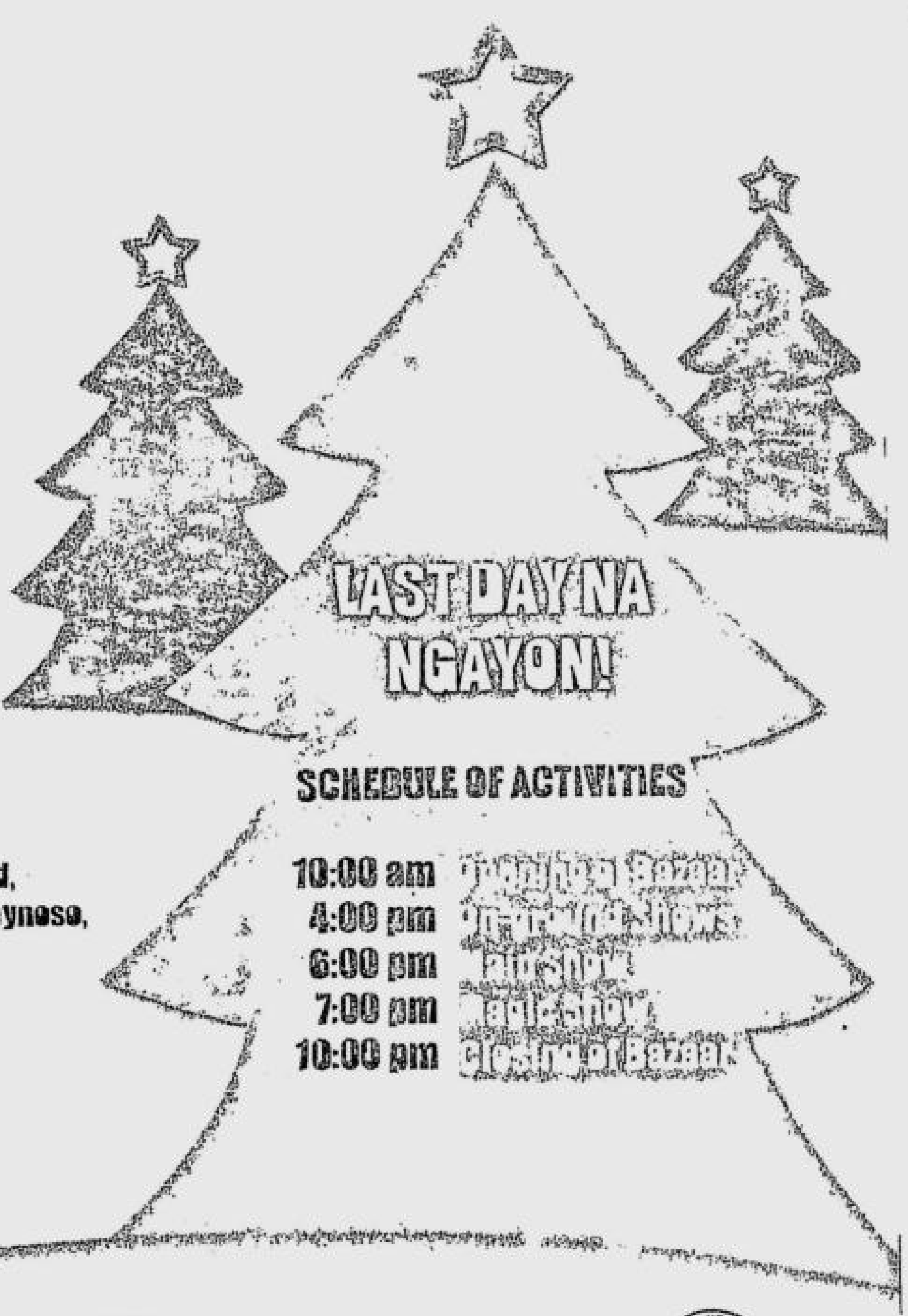
Iwa Moto, Gian Carlos, Nikki Bacolod, PJ Brecht, Ashley Gruenberg, Vince Saldana,
Angelo Viva, Vaness Del Moral, Vivo Ouano, Hayca Bunevacz, Valerie Tan,
Rx Men doctors: Doc Oyie, Doc Dean, Doc Jai, Doc Marie and Sapulso's Betong and Mae.



LAST DAY NA NGAYON!

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6:00 pm	[illegible]
7:00 pm	[illegible]
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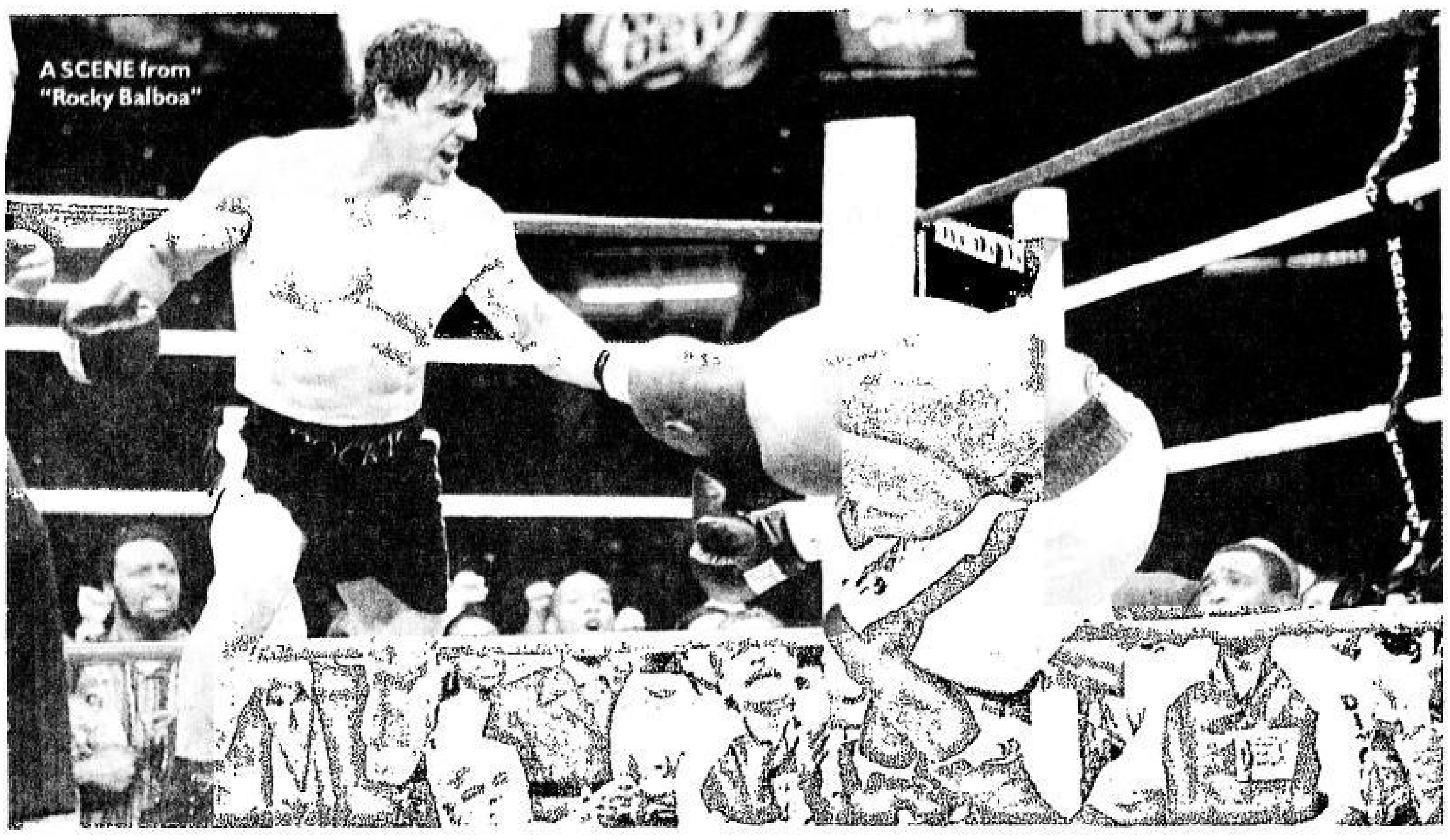

A SCENE from "Rocky Balboa"

Watch out, Manny Pacquiao-- Rocky …

From page G3

boxing champ character. The sexagenarian actor may have the last laugh on this matter.

In "Rocky Balboa," Sly's famous character comes out of retirement, intending to fight a few minor league boxers. But our aging pugilist is offered a match to fight the reigning heavyweight champion. Guess what happens next?

As for "Rambo IV," our hero is living as a recluse until a young girl's disappearance forces him to come out and take justice into his own hands.

Sylvester is happily married to model **Jennifer Flavin**, with whom he has three daughters. He has two sons with his first wife, actress **Sasha Stallone**. His second marriage, to actress and model **Brigitte Nielsen**, did not bear any children. Below are excerpts of our press con with Sylvester.

How has your body changed since the first "Rocky" movie?

I've gained about 40 pounds so I am now a legitimate heavyweight for the first time (laughter). It only took six films. In the first one, I was a middleweight. In the fourth one, I was a light heavyweight. I'm definitely a heavyweight now. I don't do as much exercise. I do it three times a week. I just focus on not trying to push too hard. Mainly, it's diet. I eat well five days a week and on two days, I just go absolutely crazy (laughter). I eat every piece of junk in the world and then I feel guilty for the next five days and don't eat (laughter). That's how you work. Guilty. Unguilty. Guilty. Unguilty (laughter).

Did you have to get in shape for this movie?

I think when you reach a certain age, you're never in good shape. Something is always broken (laughter). You learn to live with the condition. This hurts, that hurts—you just try to work around it. Right before this film (laughing), I ruptured a disc in my neck and broke my foot so I rehearsed in crutches. It was absurd. By the time the fight scene came around, I said to Antonio Tarver, who is a real boxer (he plays a heavyweight champion), since the choreography is not as exact as in the other ones (the earlier 'Rocky' movies), "Let's just hang out a little bit and see what happens." So a couple of those knockdowns you saw were real. The rupturing of my neck disc and the breaking of my foot turned out to be God sent because they made the fight more spontaneous and less rehearsed.

But why would you put yourself through all that physical ordeal?

I am 60 years old. I don't believe that people, just because they get older, have to abandon their dream or their ability to want to do something. So the movie is symbolic of still wanting to participate. Rocky says the last thing to age is the heart. The reason I really wanted to do this film is to show that our generation is not outside looking in—it's still vital. We want to be part of the parade, not watch the parade.

You tried to get out of the "Rocky" and "Rambo" roles but somehow it didn't work so well. Is that frustrating or have you learned to accept it?

No one likes to fail at anything but I believe I'm a better person for it. I've learned life's lessons. I teach them to my children. You can't be everything. You're given certain gifts and that's what you should try to be.

As for Rambo, again, it's about respecting our generation. It's about an older man who denies what he is. He's been living this very simple life in the jungle. No matter where he hides, life catches up with him. He's pulled into a very realistic situation, like what's happening in the world right now. I went out and tried to find something very historical to write about which is Burma. I'll try to provide a story that's entertaining but hopefully it will shed some light on a very serious situation about human atrocities.

There was an era when you, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Bruce Willis ruled Hollywood. Do you guys keep in touch?

Bruce, Arnold and I are still very close. It's extraordinary how our lives have changed. Bruce is also going through a renaissance with "Die Hard," going back to the things that he does well. Arnold is, God knows he'll be president eventually (laughter). I know it. If it's possible (laughter), he will rewrite the Constitution. I'll be there defending it as Rambo (laughter).

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is a great role model today. He is extraordinary. He's a great example of how we can continue as we get older to make our lives better.

How has Jennifer helped you stabilize your life?

I've said this before, if you have a happy wife, you have a happy life. I just let her do everything and everything is fine. She makes great decisions. It took me years to be able to trust someone to do that. Now I really enjoy my life. She just seems to know what's right, from buying my clothes to everything. She provided me with three daughters whom I love so much it hurts sometimes. That has been a fantastic revival of my life. She took out all the anger in me, brought in all the love so I've had a wonderful metamorphosis, thanks to her.

My first marriage (to Sasha Stallone), as you know, didn't go so well. I have a relationship with my sons but this second one (marriage) has been a second beginning. Another reason why I wanted to do "Rocky" is because I felt that this was the new beginning.

What difference do you see in yourself as a parent this time around?

I have realized that the most important thing is home, family and the love of your children and wife. That's what is number one. Before, I thought career was number one so I was gone all the time. I learned the hard way that the most important thing is home.

My daughters sort of look like me but thank God they have their mother's personality (laughter). They're all charming and get good grades at school. I got terrible grades. I was in the corner (laughter) with a dunce hat on.

Did you actually attempt to follow in your father's footsteps by also trying to be a beautician?

Oh my God, you're really going down memory lane. Like I said, I was not very focused in school. In those days, they didn't try to figure out if you had a problem. They just said, get out. I tried to go to a school to be like my father, a beautician. But I realized I had no talent for that at all. You also have to be able to tell stories and entertain. I just couldn't do it. So I applied to this school in Switzerland. At that time, they'd accept anybody because they really needed the money. They'd accept Frankenstein. So I went. It was not a very good school at the time. It became better. That's where acting came about. There was an audition for "Death of a Salesman." I thought, let me try this. I was on my way to do something in sports but I just walked in. That changed my life. I want to say that if I didn't have that audition, I wouldn't be here.

Can you tell us about another side of you, that you collect art and you paint?

I was just at the Marlborough Gallery in New York, looking at the works of new young artists. It's so invigorating. I know I shouldn't go in there because I know I am going to walk out with something. Sure enough, I did. It's just so good for the soul. I do paint a bit. It is my hobby. I hate to call myself a painter because there are so many good painters. To me, everyone should paint a bit. It's good for the soul. Even if you don't think your work is good, you'd be surprised that after doing a few canvases, you start to get your own style. I am trying to teach my children to love painting too.

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.

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HOW TO GET TICKETS
FRENZY - Purchase 1 pack of FRENZY Condoms with the MTV MUSIC SUMMIT promo sticker at selected 711 and Watsons Personal Care outlets in the GMA area or at the FRENZY Booth by the entrance of the Bonifacio Global City Open Field on December 5, 2006 to be able to watch the MTV Music Summit 2006 for FREE. The FRENZY Pack with the promo sticker serves as your ticket to the concert. UNICEF - Just get in touch with the UNICEF volunteers of selected schools to snag tickets. Participating schools are ATENEO (contact Isa at 0917-5310393 or email isadora_delacruz@yahoo.com), LYCEUM (ask the members of the UNICEF Volunteer Org.), UST (ask the members of the UST/UNICEF Volunteers organization), FEU (contact Jana at 0917-6070528), DLSU St. Benilde (contact Marco 0918-9474339 or 0917-5264339). COLT 45 ROCKISTA ON MTV - For every 3 Colt 45 bottle crowns, you get one (1) free ticket to the MTV Music Summit 2006. Bring your crowns to the redemption booth outside the MTV office on Dec. 04 and 05, from 10am to 4pm only. E-GAMES - Present an unscratched epoints card of any denomination to any Station 168 Internet Cafe to receive a ticket to the MTV Music Summit. Tickets are limited.
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COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE, LOCAL GOVERNANCE, AGRI-BUSINESS, EDUCATION, REINTEGRATION OF EX-COMBATANTS AND PROJECT ADMINISTRATION EXPERTS

Chemonics International (www.chemonics.com) seeks experts in the fields of community and mid-scale infrastructure, local governance, agri-business, education, and reintegration of ex-combatants for long and short-term assignments under an anticipated three to four-year USAID project in Mindanao, Philippines.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Five years experience in fields listed above. Experience working with USAID or other donors preferred.
- Advanced degree in law, governance, economics, public administration/ finance or related field preferred.
- Five years of relevant experience in the Philippines or Southeast Asia. Experience in Mindanao preferred.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills in English and Filipino.

Project administration candidates are also sought to support project technical activities. Experience in the following fields is desired: operations management, communications, monitoring and evaluation, training, finance and accounting, grants management, procurement and information technology.

Qualifications:

- Five years experience working on donor projects in fields listed above.
- USAID related procurement and contracting experience preferred.
- Five years of relevant experience in the Philippines or Southeast Asia.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills in English and Filipino.

Please send a chronological CV, 3-4 references and a brief cover letter to: **philrecruit@chemonics.com** by December 15, 2006. Specify position in email subject line.Final candidates will be contacted for interviews.

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JCS CORPORATE OFFICE

G/F OCTAGON BLDG., SAN MIGUEL AVENUE, (BEHIND SM MEGAMALL, FRONTING SAN MIGUEL BLDG.) ORTIGAS BUSINESS CENTER
DATE: DECEMBER 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
MON,TUE,WED,THU,FRI,SAT - 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
SUNDAY - 2:00 PM

OUTSIDE VENUE

- JOLLIBEE SM SOUTHMALL LAS PINAS (INFRONT SM SUPER MARKET) 4:00PM DEC.8 (FRI)
- JOLLIBEE GRAND CENTRAL (MONUMENTO) 5:00 PM DEC.7 (THU)
- JOLLIBEE ROSARIO PASIG 4:00 PM DEC.8 (FRI)
- CHOWKING MALOLOS BAYAN 2:00 PM DEC.10 (SUN.)
- JOLLIBEE EVER RECTO (G/F EVER GOTESCO MALL,CM RECTO) 5:00 PM DEC.9(SAT)
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CLIP THIS AD FOR SEAT RESERVATION / CONTACT PERSON : JHULZ (0921-2755063)

PNOC DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PNOC Development and Management Corporation (PDMC), a subsidiary of Philippine National Oil Company, invites all interested bidders to bid for the SALE on an "as-is where-is" basis the following properties:

Location of Property	Classification	Area (sq. m.)
1. Site 2A, Brgy. Ligtong, Rosario, Cavite	Industrial / Special Economic Zone	415,942
2. Site 1B, Brgy. Tejeros Convention, Rosario, Cavite	Commercial	7,088

Bid forms and Terms of Reference may be secured after payment of non-refundable amount of P10,000.00 during office hours, Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm from the Bids and Awards Committee, 5F PNOC Bldg. 6, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Metro Manila.

For parties interested to bid, schedule of activities are as follows: 1) pre-bid conference shall be conducted on December 13, 2006 at 2:00 pm; 2) deadline for the submission of bids shall be on January 17, 2007 at 2:00 pm; 3) opening of eligibility documents shall be on January 17, 2007 at 2:15 pm; and 4) opening of the financial bid shall be on January 29, 2007 at 2:00 pm at the above address.

The bidder further acknowledges that he/she has been given every opportunity to investigate, inspect and verify the properties offered for sale to ascertain the actual conditions thereof as well as the status of the titles. The sale of the properties shall be on an "AS-IS WHERE-IS" basis and the winning bidder shall undertake the responsibility to acquire and maintain peaceful possession and enjoyment of the property without seeking the assistance of PDMC. If for any reason the abovementioned dates are declared non-working holidays, the bidding activities shall be held on the next working day at the same time and place aforementioned. PDMC reserves the right to reject any and all bids/offers or to waive any formality thereto and/or accept any such bids/offers or portions thereof as may be advantageous to PDMC. For inquiries, please call tel. nos. 8402652 to 53.

(Sgd.) **FLORENDO R. GARCIA, JR.**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Dec. 1, 2 & 3, 2006)

For your Classified and Obituary Ads please call:

☎ **897-8425**

FARMER DRIES PALAY

A farmer in Bagasong, Antique takes advantage of the good weather to dry his palay. Serving as primary market for farmers, the National Food Authority in Antique buys at P10.50 per kilogram inclusive of P10 per kg support price and additional P0.50 per kg incentive for drying, transport and cooperative development (CDIF). At present the average prevailing market price for palay in the province is P9 per kg. The NFA in Antique ranked next to Iloilo in terms of regional palay procurement target at 41,000 bags. Actual procurement since January reached 24,958 bags equivalent to 61 percent of the target.

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TO BE ACCREDITED, the SOLID AND HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICE PROVIDER should have the following MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

- ➢ Registered and in good standing with the Securities and Exchange Commission or the Department of Trade and Industry.
- ➢ Accredited by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and/or the National/Regional/Local Solid Waste Management Commission.
- ➢ In continuous operations with good track record for the last three (3) years.
- ➢ Implemented directly or through clients, RA 6969 and RA 9003, and related laws.
- ➢ Have facilities or capacity to handle, store, collect, transport and dispose solid and hazardous waste materials.
- ➢ With available crew of at least 10 properly trained officers and workers.
- ➢ Have existing contracts with at least two (2) industrial clients.
- ➢ Compliant with Philippine labor laws and standards.
- ➢ Could mobilize a team with equipment and gears on short notice.

IF YOUR COMPANY MEETS THESE REQUIREMENTS, PLEASE SUBMIT LETTER OF INTENT, COMPANY PROFILE AND PROOF OF QUALIFICATION ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 11, 2006 TO:

The Accreditation Board for Quezon Power
c/o Emmanuel M. Florece
BPO INTERNATIONAL, INC.
6758 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Telephone Nos. 892-0481 to 94 (local 8879), 0918-3876853
Fax No. 325-2764 / 893-9532

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NFA will not accept Genetically Modified rice for food security

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY gave the assurance that it will not accept rice loan consisting of genetically modified rice from any country as part of the Philippine food security stocks.

NFA administrator Gregorio Y. Tan, Jr. said that the Philippine government had already sent a technical team to the United States to conduct tests on rice stocks slated for shipment into the country under the US PL 480 program.

US PL 480 is a soft loan the US government grants to developing countries including the Philippines, in the form of rice and other cereals. The loan carries low interest rate with long repayment and a five-year grace period.

The issue on genetically modified rice (GMO), according to Tan, has been raised against the US PL 480 rice for 2006 which the Philippines has yet to import.

Tan emphasized that should the technical assessment team find that the rice for shipment to the Philippines has been genetically modified, the government will exercise its option not to accept the rice loan.

The NFA takes charge of monetizing US PL 480 rice loan before turning over the proceeds to the Bureau of Treasury.

"Though there are assurances that GM rice is safe, it would be prudent for the government to take the necessary precautions than risk the health of the Filipinos," Tan noted.

ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS & HEADQUARTERS SERVICE COMMAND
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines through the General Headquarters and Headquarters Service Command invites all interested parties to submit sealed proposals for the sale of Three (3) Lots of Material Properties located at the Supply Unit (Provisional), GHQ & HSC, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City on "AS IS, WHERE IS" basis Pre-bidding Conference will be conducted on December 12, 2006 at 1:30 P.M. at the Daza Park Pavilion, GHQ & HSC, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City

QUANTITY : 1. One (1) Lot • DESCRIPTION : CV-002-004 One Hundred Twenty Eight (128) Assorted Salvaged/ Junk Vehicles • LOCATION : PRDD SU(P)

QUANTITY : 2. One (1) Lot • DESCRIPTION : CV-003-004 Assorted Scrap and residue from OM, Engineer, Signal, Ordnance, Medical and Dental items estimated weight of 120 tons • LOCATION : PRDD SU(P)

QUANTITY: 3 One (1) lot DESCRIPTION • CV-004-006 Scrap materials of Demilitarized and condemned / obsolete firearms with an estimated at 258 kgs • LOCATION : WHIA SU(P)

The above obsolete / unserviceable equipment and other scrap (demilitarized) materials may be inspected at the Supply Unit (P), GHQ & HSC, CGEA, QC during office hours. Contact person Mr. Marlon U. Bulong, SAO, PRDD, SU(P) GHQ & HSC at Tel. No. 911-6001 local 4455

(Sgd.) BGEN ALFREDO S CAYTON JR AFP
Chairman, GHQ & HSC Disposal Committee

(PDI – Dec. 2, 3 & 4, 2006)

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Lagro 417-[illegible]	Araneta 716-6795	Alabang 850-6259	Valenzuela 443-0142
Marikina 933-6068	Cainta 647-5140	Gimenez(KPC) 412-5897	Angeles City 045-626-1487
Ortigas 717-1987	Cubao 438-7418	Gimenez(UP) 416-4117	Batangas City 043-980-2046
Recto 493-6502	Fairview 428-0832	Mindanao Ave 454-3793	Calamba City 049-545-2367
Head Office 928-6260	Junction 248-2404	Makati Square 848-0893	Davao City 043-880227-6799
	Makati 890-4160	Novaliches 418-8080	

Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Province of Iloilo
CITY OF PASSI

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section 5 of R.A. No. 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that **FLORENCE P. PALMARES** has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from **"FLORENCIA"** to **"FLORENCE"** in the birth certificate of **FLORENCIA PALMARES** who was born on July 15, 1954 at Kiamba, Cotabato (now Kiamba, Sarangani) and whose parents are Angel Palmares and Agustina Sivila.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his/ her written opposition with this office

(Sgd.) NORMA A. PANES
City Civil Registrar

(PDI - Dec. 3 & 10, 2006)

INVITATION TO BID

"AS IS WHERE IS"

Damaged Motor Vehicles

2003 Toyota Revo, Wagon / XLJ-699
2003 Isuzu Crosswind, Wagon / XJY-506

For particulars, call Philam Ins. Co., Inc./ Dick Cariño. Tel. #878-5457

(PDI–Dec. 2 & 3, 2006)

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144 • 722-1155

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
PRISM PRIVATE SECTOR MOBILIZATION FOR FAMILY PLANNING

Request for Submission of Grant Applications

The Private Sector Mobilization for Family Health Project (PRISM) is seeking applications for a grant award intended for

Provision of Technical Assistance to Develop Private Practice Midwives' Facilities into PhilHealth-Accredited Birthing Homes
RFA 2006-03-01

PRISM is a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under USAID Contract Number 492-C-00-04-00036-00 and implemented by Chemonics International Incorporated.

Grant funding of up to total US$ 400,000 or PHP 20M will be provided to 3 successful grant applications in accordance with standard USAID policies.

This solicitation is open to Philippine-based and SEC-registered institutions such as health training institutions, business consultancy organizations and business development institutions, or consortia of these institutions, that have technical capacities necessary for the scope of work. Specific eligibility requirements are indicated in the Request for Applications (RFA) document.

The solicitation document will be released on **Monday, 4 December 2006**. Applicants interested in getting the full details of this solicitation can request for copies of the full RFA document from grants@prism.org.ph. Likewise, the RFA can be downloaded in PDF format from http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/PRISMGrants/. The closing date for the submission of application is **5:00pm, 10 January 2007.**

Grant Applicants' Conferences will be held at the following PRISM offices: **3 January 2007,** 2 pm at the PRISM Cebu office Gold Zeal, 2F Cebu Holdings Center, Cebu Business Park, Cardinal Rosales Ave., Cebu City; **4 January 2007,** 2pm at the PRISM Davao office 4/F Pryce Tower, Pryce Business Park, J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City; **5 January 2007** at 2pm at the PRISM Manila office 23/F Wynsum Corporate Plaza, F. Ortigas Jr. Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

For further details, please contact Cristina Avila
CAvila@prism.org.ph or Agnes Payson
APayson@prism.org.ph.

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Sorsogon
Municipality of Sta. Magdalena

Invitation for Bids

Date: December 3, 2006
Contract ID No.: SP-112-IN-01 to 02
World Bank Loan No.: 4446 PH

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of Local Government Finance and Development and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for the ***Construction of Shoreline Protection/Seawall.*** Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The ***Municipality of Sta. Magdalena, Sorsogon*** invites sealed bids from eligible sources for the ***Construction of Shoreline Protection/Seawall*** as follows:
    a. ***Package 1 – 963 l.m. Seawall, 2.50 m. effective depth, 40 l.m. Protection 14, l.m. two lane RCPC and one unit manhole at brgys. 1 and 4 and;***
    b. ***Package 2 – 385 l.m. Seawall with 3.0 m effective depth and 60 l.m. River protection at Brgy. San Bartolome.***
3. Bidding documents may be purchased starting ***December 4, 2006 at the Office of the SPMO, Local Government Compound, Sta. Magdalena, Sorsogon*** upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of: ***Package 1 – Six Thousand Pesos (Php 6,000.00) and for Package 2 – Three Thousand Pesos (Php 3,000.00)*** or its equivalent in a freely-convertible currency, for each package. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ***ninety (90) days*** after bid opening and must be accompanied by bid security for the following packages: ***Package 1 – Four Hundred Ninety Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php 490,500.00), Package 2 – Two Hundred Sixty Six Thousand Pesos (Php 266,000.00)*** in a form of cash, certified check, bank guarantee or its equivalent in a convertible currency and shall be delivered to the ***Office of the Municipal Treasurer, Local Government Compound, Sta. Magdalena, Sorsogon on or before 10:00 A.M. of January 9, 2007*** at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.
5. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post qualification. The ***Estimated Project Cost*** for the following packages are: ***Package I – Php 19,617,312.91*** and for ***Package 2 – Php 10,629,858.75.***
6. A pre-bid conference will be held at ***10:00 A.M. on December 21, 2006 at the SB Session Hall, Local Government Compound, Sta. Magdalena, Sorsogon.***

(Sgd.) **DOROTEO C. FRAGO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – December 3, 2006)

FOR SALE

2-BR & 3BR RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUM UNITS

EASTON PLACE CONDOMINIUM
118 VALERO STREET CORNER RUFINO STREET
SALCEDO VILLAGE, MAKATI CITY

PLEASE CONTACT:
HELENE AT TEL. #752-8323 or
MOBILE 0917-8229013
BROKERS ARE WELCOME.

Department of Social Welfare and Development
Batasan Pambansa Complex, Quezon City

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Hiring of Janitorial Services
[ITB No. GOP/06-DSWD-017-A]

1. The *Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)*, through the General Administration and Support Services Group Funds (GASSG) intends to apply the sum of *Seven Million Three Hundred Thirty-Three Thousand Two Hundred Eighty-Eight Pesos and Fifty-Five Centavos (Php 7,333,288.55)* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for "Hiring of Janitorial Services" with ITB No GOP/06-DSWD-017-A. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the "Hiring of Janitorial Services". The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from *DSWD BAC Secretariat* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of Three Thousand Pesos *(Php 3,000.00)* starting 24 November 2006. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. **The *DSWD* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *4 December 2006 at 9:00 a.m.* at the 2nd Floor Administrative Conference Room (Old Building).**
7. **Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before *9:30 a.m on 18 December 2006.* All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of cash, or manager's check, or cashier's check and in the amount of at least equivalent to one percent (1%) of the ABC or Seventy-Three Thousand Three Hundred Thirty-Two Pesos and Eighty-Nine Centavos (Php 73,332.89).** Combination of two (2) or more of any of the foregoing forms is not allowed. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on *18 December 2006 at 9:30 a.m. at the DSWD Central Office 2nd Floor, Old Building, Administrative Conference Room.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The *Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

THE BAC CHAIRPERSON
DSWD Bids and Awards Committee
c/o BAC Secretariat
2nd Floor, DSWD Old Building,
Batasan Pambansa Complex, Quezon City
Telefax no.: 951-7116
Trunkline No.: 931-8101 Local 217

(SGD) FLORITA R. VILLAR
Assistant Secretary for
Policy & Programs Group and
BAC Chairperson

(PDI--Nov. 26 & Dec. 3, 2006)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
CITY OF ILOILO

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), Iloilo City invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid on the following project

Name of Project	Lease of Office Space
Project Location	Iloilo City
Approved Budget for the Contract	P8,880,000.00
Contract Duration	2 years
Scope of Work	All lease payments including utilities shall be Translated as Tax credit in favor of winning Bidders.

The Schedule of Bidding Activities is as follows:

Period for the Submission of Letter of Intent	December 08-12, 2006
Period for the Submission of Eligibility Forms	December 08-12, 2006
Period for the Issuance of Bid Documents	December 15-19, 2006
Pre-Bid Conference at the City Legal Office Conference Room	Dec. 27, 2006 at 10:00 AM
Last Day of Submission of Bids in Sealed Envelopes (c/o BAC Secretariat)	Jan. 09, 2007 at 10:00 AM
Opening of Bids in Sealed Envelopes at the City Legal Office Conference Room	Jan. 09, 2007 at 10:00 AM

Complete sets of Eligibility Requirements may be obtained from the Office of the BAC Secretariat at the General Santos Office, City Hall, Iloilo City. Duly accomplished Eligibility Forms shall be submitted in sealed envelope addressed to the BAC Chairman, c/o BAC Secretariat.

Eligible contractors may obtain the Bid Tender Documents at the Office of the BAC Secretariat, General Services Office, City Hall, Iloilo City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand (P2,000.00) Pesos on the above prescribed period.

Prospective Bidders shall signify their conformance to the Bidding Terms and Conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The criteria to be used by BAC in the Eligibility Check of Prospective Bidders shall be on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" basis.

The provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations and other applicable rules and regulations shall govern all particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contracxt.

Executive Order No. 398, dated January 12, 2005, by the Office of the President, under Sec. 3 – "To ensure continuing compliance with tax laws, all government contracts shall include a stipulation that the private contracting party shall pay taxes in full and on time and that failure to do so will entitle the government to suspend payment for any goods or services delivered by the private contracting party.

The BAC reserves the right to accept or reject all Bids or part thereof, to waive formality therein or to accept such bids or to award any work that is considered most advantageous to the Local Government Unit.

(Sgd.) Atty. **EDGARDO J. GIL**
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Dec. 3, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Negros Oriental
Municipality of Sibulan

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

Date: December 3, 2006
Contract No. SP-107-IN-01
World Bank Loan Nº: 4446 PH

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of Local Government Finance and Development and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for the ***Completion of Two-Storey Public Market.*** Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The **Municipality of Sibulan, Negros Oriental** invites sealed bids from eligible sources for the ***Completion of Two-Storey Public Market with total building area of 2,028 sq.m.***
3. Bidding documents may be purchased starting ***December 4, 2006 – January 11, 2007 from Mrs. Josephine P. Barraquias, BAC Secretariat, at the MPDC Office, Sibulan, Negros Oriental,*** upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of ***Eight Thousand Pesos (Php 8,000.00)*** or its equivalent in a freely-convertible currency, for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) days after bid opening and must be accompanied by bid security of ***Four Hundred Seventy Four Thousand Pesos (Php 474,000.00)*** in a form of cash, certified check, bank guarantee or its equivalent in a convertible currency, and shall be delivered to ***Mrs. Josephine P. Barraquias, BAC Secretariat, at the MPDC Office, Municipal Hall, Sibulan, Negros Oriental on or before 9:00 A.M. of January 11, 2007*** at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.
5. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post qualification. The **Estimated Project Cost** for the subproject is ***Eighteen Million Nine Hundred Forty One Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety Nine Pesos & 04/100 (Php 18,941,899.04).***
6. A pre-bid conference will be on *December 21, 2006; 9:00 AM at the SB Session Hall, Municipality of Sibulan, Negros Oriental.*

(Sgd.) **CORNELIA C. LOZAGA**
BAC Chairman

(PDI--Dec. 3, 2006)

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- ➢ Highly Commercialized area/vacant lot near SM South Mall, along Alabang-Zapote Road LA-2,028 sq.m. ideal for food chain, commercial spaces selling price = @ P45.0M
- ➢ 3 stry condo unit @ Makati Prime City @ San Antonio Village, Makati FA=210.79 sq.m. selling price = P6.2M
- ➢ Rawland located @ Trece Martirez near market Provincial Capitol, with concrete road, lot ideal for low cost area = 14 hectares @ P500 per sq.m.
- ➢ Highly commercialized vacant lot located near St. Joseph, Jollibee, Residenza Subd., Pag-Ibig City, lot area - 4,341 sq.m. @ P 7,000 per sq.m.
- ➢ w/ 2-storey office bldg., 3-lofty warehouses, ideal for industrial, warehouse, plant, call centers, Mall, located along National Highway, bgy. Makiling, Calamba, Laguna, lot area = 31,483 sq.m. total floor area = 3,160 sq.m. price = @ 119.0M

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CICM-RP celebrates 100th year

IN CELEBRATION OF THEIR 100TH YEAR in the Philippines, the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (CICM) begins its year-long Centennial Celebration on Nov. 28, 2006 with simultaneous celebrations in the CICM Provincial House in New Manila, Quezon City and in CICM schools, namely Saint Mary University in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, St. Louis University in Baguio City, University of St. Louis in Tuguegarao, Cagayan, St. Louis College in San Fernando, La Union and in St. Louis School in Mandaue, Cebu, and in the various CICM mission stations around the country.

The theme of the CICM-RP Centennial celebration is 100 Years of CICM Missionary Presence in the Philippines: Remembrance and Revitalization. Through the Centennial Celebration, the CICM hopes to make more people aware of CICM, to express gratitude to people and communities for the opportunity to do mission, to revitalize missionary spirituality among CICM and mission partners, to intensify and renew mission and vocation animation and to shape a dynamic future direction of CICM in the Philippines.

The CICM is the acronym for Congregatio Immaculati Cordis Mariae, which is Latin for Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In the Philippines, the CICM used to be called the "Belgian Fathers", because the Congregation was founded in 1862 in Scheut, a suburb of Brussels, the capital of Belgium. The Congregation was founded by the National Chaplain of the Association of the Holy Childhood, Father Theophile Verbiest, together with some companions.

The CICM-RP Centennial Celebration will feature events and activities throughout the year, until Nov. 28, 2007 and will include the launching of the Centennial Book, the CICM Tree Parks, a pilgrimage to Scheut in Belgium, Recognition and Awards, exhibits, lectures and symposia honoring the life and work of CICM missionaries of the past and the contributions of CICM to national progress and society. Last week, a music festival was held at the Center for Culture and the Arts of Saint Louis University in Baguio City, during which various composers and choral groups from the CICM schools competed for the official original centennial hymn, as judged by nationally recognized musicians like Dr. Ramon Santos of UP, Dom Benildus Maramba of San Beda and UST, and Sr. Anunciata Sta. Ana of St. Paul's University. Also slated are various parish-based, school-based and youth-oriented activities such as the Centennial Mission Youth Camp and competitions in sports, music and arts. For more information, please call the CICM Provincial House, tel. nos. 7245402; 7276932; 410-8160; 414-9373.

Symposium
Surgery

1ST ANNUAL ASIAN HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER SYMPOSIUM ON ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

Dr. Hermogenes P. Villareal, chairman of the Department of Dental Medicine (2nd from right), with the speakers of the 1st Asian Hospital and Medical Center Symposium on Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery held last November 18 at the hospital (from left): Dr. Michael S. Florencio, Dr. Luis Gerardo G. Sunico, Dr. Mercedes Glendora H. De Villa, Dr. Hannah D. Chua, Prof. Lim Cheung, Dr. Theodore James R. Nicholoff, Jr., Dr. Roberto M. Pangan and Dr. Leandro Rosero, vice chairman of the Department of Dental Medicine.

ICPS Batch '84 and '88 alumni homecoming

The Immaculate Conception Parish School (ICPS) Cubao, Quezon City Batch '84 (elementary) and Batch '88 (high school) will hold their alumni homecoming on Dec. 9, 2006, Saturday at 6 p.m. at the ICPS/ICCS Elementary School Grounds.

Dubbed as "Miss n'yo na ba ang Imma?", the event will include awards and recognition to the school's alumni. There will also be raffles, games and production numbers.

Come and join the fun! For details, please contact the following: Geraldine Razon (0917-8837192); Patrick James Ong (0920-5888904); or Dennis Mejia (0919-5282996) or log-on to: www.vervo.com/icps.

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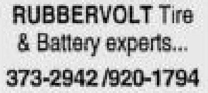

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AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP BR of 2230 M. Roxas St. Sta Ana Manila Auction Sale on DEC. 15, 2006. Fri. at 2:30 in the afternoon. Respectively, JUL. 15 - AUG. 15, 2006 SONS of J. LANUZA, Auctioneer. (PDI - December 03, 2006)

MARA PAWNSHOP
I, II, III, IV and Comembo Br. of Makati City. AUCTION SALE on DEC. 15, 2006 FRI. at 10:30, 11:00, 12:30, and 1:30 and 8:30 in the morning and on the afternoon, Respectively JUL. 15 - AUG. 15, 2006.
Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer (PDI - December. 03, 2006)

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ESTATE OF THE LATE ALMANZOR E. TUBIG WAS EXTRAJUDICIALLY SETTLED AMONG HIS HEIRS AS PER DOC NO. 230, PAGE NO. 47, BOOK NO. 13, SERIES OF 2006 OF NOTARY PUBLIC CASIANO ATUEL JR. OF PATEROS M. MLA. (PDI- DEC. 3, 10, & 17, 2006)

Notice is given that the estate of the late Ramona, Manuel, Eduardo and Lourdes O. Montilla was settled extrajudicially with waiver of rights by their heirs per Doc. 194; Page 39; Book 9; Series of 2006 before Notary Public Atty. Oscar A. Pascua.
PDI-Nov 19,26 & Dec 3, 2006

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Notice is given that the estate of the late ALFREDO O. CARILLO was extrajudicially settled among his heirs before Notary Public Atty. Daniel Rafael Penuela of Bacolod City, Per Doc#75 Page#15 Book#XII Series of 2006.
(PDI- Nov. 26, Dec. 3 & 10, 2006)

Notice is given that the estate of late spouses RUFO LIMON, SR and LEONILA R. LIMON was extrajudicially settled and partitioned among the heirs as per Doc #86; Page #18; Book IV; Series of 2006 before Notary Public Eden Z. Punsalan of Manila.
(PDI - Dec. 3, 10 & 17, 2006)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late CHRYSLER A. BALNEG was extrajudicially settled by the heirs as per Doc. #944 Page #189 Book #52 Series of 2005 by Notary Public Atty. Nestor C. Rivera of Makati City (PDI - Nov. 19, 26, & Dec. 3, 2006)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late EDMUNDO A. MOLINA, who died last March 29, 2005 was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc # 159, Page #32, Book # 1, Series of 2006. Before a Notary Public Atty Jane M. Lacandazo PDI-Nov 26, Dec 3&10, 2006)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that Aboitiz Equity Ventures Stock Certificate No. 71992 with 800 shares under the name of Maria Ocampo was lost. If no contest received new certificate will be issued.
PDI-Nov 26, Dec 3 & 10, 2006

Notice of loss of PCIBANK Stock Cert. Nos.12944 w/ 58shares & 18524 w/46shares issued to JOSEFA O. OXALES. If no contest received, new certificates will be issued. (PDI-Nov. 26 & Dec. 3 & 10, 2006)

PLEASE BE INFORMED THAT THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONAL RECEIPTS, 20481-20500, ARE DECLARED INVALID AND NON-BINDING TO CITIFINANCIAL. (PDI - DEC. 3 & 10. 2006)

PERSONAL

NOVENA TO THE MOST SACRED HEART of JESUS and SAINT JUDE
May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be Praised, Blessed, Loved, Adored and Glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Amen.
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pray for us.
St. Jude, Worker of Miracles, helper for the helpless, Pray for us.
Say nine times a day for nine days. Prayer will be answered by the eight day. It has never failed.
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RESIDENTIAL / AGRICULTURAL

	MANILA – Taft Ave., Malate	MIN BID
	Burgundy T-Pacific Place Condo (across Dela Salle)	
1	Resl. Condo w/ prkng slot # 16, Unit 2310, 23-F / FA 37	2,285,000
2.	Resl. Condo w/ prkng slot # 12, Unit 2210, 22-F / FA 37	2,285,000
	PASIG – Ort., AIC Gold Twr.	**MIN BID**
	near Robinsons Galleria & Poveda School	
3	Resl Condo W/ prkng slot (#19,B-4) Unit 1410, 14/F Emerald Ave cor Sapphire&Garnet St /FA 137	6,500,000
4.	Resl Condo Unit w/ prkng slot (#42,B-5) Unit 909, 9/F Emerald, Ave.cor Sapphire & Garnet St /FA 137	6,500,000
	LAGUNA	**MIN BID**
5.	Res'l Corner Lot / Lot 93 Block Lake Caliraya Country Club Subd., Phase-II, Brgy. Lewin, Lumban LA 886	380,000
6	Res'l / Agri'l Lot / Lot 20, Blk 12 Apitong St, Ceris II Subd Brgy Canlubang, Calamba City / LA 480	1,810,000
	LAS PINAS - Brgy. Talon-IV	**MIN BID**
7.	Lot/L2 B1,Chrysanthemum St Hansuyin Vill / LA 361 (via Marcos Alvarez Ave & nr SM Las Pinas)	1,661,000
	QUEZON CITY	**MIN BID**
8.	3-Sty Thse/Unit R Sentosa Hts # 18 Sct Bayoran St, South Triangle LA 182 / FA 391 (between Sct Tuazon & T. Morato, near Hotel Rembrant) w/ Lis Pendens	7,200,000
9	Hse & Lot / # 19 Balabac St. Araneta Vill, Brgy. Dona Imelda LA-777, FA-348 * w/ Lis Pendens (near Quezon Inst. & SM Centerpoint)	8,500,000
	SAN JUAN – Addition Hills	**MIN BID**
10.	3-Sty w/ 2-levels B'ment Resl T'hse/Unit-G,Goldlane Exec Hms #'208 Ortega cor. L. Mencias Sts LA75 FA250 (nr Cardinal Santos Hosp)	7,300,000
	PARANAQUE CITY	**MIN BID**
11.	Resl Condo Unit w/ prkng slot Unit 1801, 18th flr Chateau De Baie Condo, Roxas Blvd cor Airport Rd FA 144 (b/ween Baclaran Church & Uniwide C'tel)	5,850,000
	MAKATI CITY - Kingswood Twr	**MIN BID**
	P. Tamo cor V. Cruz Extn, near Shopwise	
12	Condo /Unit 4-C. Twr B, 3BR, 2T/B & 1-Prkng slot.FA 77/Prkng 12.5 (unit is facing V. Cruz Extn & Mkti CBD)	3,425,000
13	Condo /Unit 14-E, Twr B, 3BR 2T/B, maid's rm. FA 77 / Prkng 12.5 (unit is facing V Cruz Extn & Mkti CBD)	3,425,000
	# 1656 Penafrancia cor D. Oliman Sts. Valenzuela	
14	Penthouse Condo w/ parking Kikusui Star Condo, Unit 5A / FA243	6,700,000
	MUNTINLUPA – Alabang	**MIN BID**
	San Jose Vill. (infront of Alabang Town Cntr)	
15.	Lot / Lot 264 (Pcs 4946), St Joseph St / LA 526 * w/ Court Decision in favor of Unionbank	3,810,000
	ANTIPOLO, RIZAL (Lots)	**MIN BID**
16	Lot/L27 B3, Brentwood St,Pine City Exec Vill,Brgy Balimbing LA 120 (nr Antipolo town proper)	575,000
17.	L 20 B 17, Jerusalem St, Palmera Hills,Ph-5,Brgy Uulan/LA 120 Via Tikling Junction & Melendres Subd)	299,000
18.	Res'l Lot / Lot 3 Block 6-A Salford St (nr cor Bristol St) Town & Country Est, Sta Cruz / LA-663 (along Sumulong Hi-way)	4,416,000
	NUEVA ECIJA - Cab. City	**MIN BID**
	# 529 Pag Asa, Daan Sarili (near LTO)	
19.	Lot / Lot 3 A 4 / LA 1,647	401,000
20	Lot / Lot 3 A 3 / LA 1,648	401,000
	Colina Subd – Sn Pedro, LAGUNA	**MIN BID**
	Brgy Sn.Antonio (nr Toll gate & Filipinas Golf)	
21	Lot / Lot 13 Blk 3 / LA 50	290,000
22	Lot / Lot 2 Blk 4 / LA 50	290,000
23	Cor. Lot / Lot 8 Blk 4 / LA 84	504,000
24	Cor Lot / Lot10 Blk 3 / LA 92	552,000
	LA MAREA - Sn Pedro, LAGUNA	**MIN BID**
	Near Sn Pedro Toll Gate – Sn Antonio	
25	Lot / L 2 B 5, Ph 3 / LA 180	1,242,000
26	Lot / L 1 B 4, Ph 3 / LA 207	1,429,000
27.	Lot / L 6 B 4, Ph 3 / LA 181	1,249,000
28	Lot / L 7 B 4, Ph 3 / LA 185	1,277,000
29	Lot / L 5 B 4, Ph 3 / LA 194	1,339,000
	BULACAN – Plaridel	**MIN BID**
	Brgy. Lalangan - Plaridel Heights	
30	Cor Lot / L 2 B 47, LA 355	1,243,000
31	Cor Lot / L 2 B 38 LA 411	1,439,000
	BATANGAS	**MIN BID**
32	Res'l T'Hse / L24 B22, Bristle Cone St, Phase 1, Brgy. San Gregorio Laurel / LA 200,FA 127 (near SMC Training Center)	4,318,000
33.	Cor Lot/L12 B2,Coral Shores Layug Subd, Bagong Silang Calatagan (beach front) / LA 1,858	6,450,000
	BATANGAS – Mt. Ridge, LAUREL	**MIN BID**
34	Resl Condo, Unit No B-1. Villa Mercedes, Niyugan / FA 186	6,500,000
35	Resl Condo, Unit No B-2, Villa Mercedes, Niyugan / FA 219	7,600,000
	BULACAN – Meycauayan	**MIN BID**
36	2 Sty Resl H & L, L14 B8, La Brezza Subd , Brgy. Pantok LA 75 / FA 48	820,000
37.	2 Sty Apart., Lot No 8 Bancal Rd , Brgy. Bancal LA 195 / FA 298 (with case)	1,850,000

RESIDENTIAL / AGRICULTURAL

	TARLAC CITY	MIN BID
38	Res'l. / Agri'l / Pcs-0369160057 Brgy Road, Brgy San Juan De Mata / LA 88,000	3,710,000
39.	2 Sty H&L / L 7 B 18, Family Park Homes, Brgy Cut-Cut II San Miguel / LA 62 / FA 40	230,000
	CAVITE – Dasmarinas	**MIN BID**
40	Hse & Lot / No 36 Kalamansi Road Greenfield Heights Subd Brgy Sampaloc 2 LA 329/FA85 (with Lis Pendens)	620,000
41.	2-Sty w/ Rfdeck H&L/L5&6 B5 Agustina Village / LA 388 FA 939 (nr Velmaris Schl & St Angela Montessori)	5,700,000
	Orchard Res'l. Estates and Golf & Country Club - Salitran, Dasmarinas, Cavite	
	FAIRWAY LOT	
42.	Lot 46 Blk 50 / LA 630	2,394,000
	NON - FAIRWAY LOT	
43	Lot 35 Blk 37 / LA 687	2,061,000
	CAVITE - Molino III, Bacoor	**MIN BID**
	Madelaine Place, Springville Subd.	
44.	Lot / Lot 8 Blk 1 / LA 117	582,000
45	Lot / Lot 19 Blk 7 / LA 132	656,000
	Central Phase 2, Springville Subd. (Lots)	
46	L 3 B 2, near ClubHse / LA 97	684,000
47	L 5 B 1, near ClubHse / LA 232	1,636,000
	Washington Manor, Springville Subd.	
48	Lot / Lot 2 Blk 2 / LA 154	1,020,000
	CAVITE – Carmona (Lot)	**MIN BID**
49	L 28 B 4, Ph 1, St Andrew St Manila Southwoods,Cabilang Baybay LA 450 (near Gate 1) * w/ Court Decision in favor of Unionbank	3,005,000
50.	L16 B1 Grand Cypress Rd / LA1,224	6,577,000
	TAGAYTAY CITY	**MIN BID**
	Tagaytay Highlands – Pine Crest Condo.	
51	Resl Condo Unit w/ prkng slot Unit 2310, 3rd flr , / FA 97 (w/o shares)	7,015,000
52	Resl Condo Unit w/ prkng slot Unit 2309, 3rd flr , / FA 97 (w/o shares)	8,050,000
	nr Tagaytay-Sta. Rosa Lag Rd & across Dome of Charity	
53.	Lot / Lot 2B1,Tagaytay-Calamba Rd, San Francisco / LA 1,171 (over looking Taal Lake)	11,000,000
	between Sta. Rosa, Lag. Short-cut & Aguinaldo H-way	
54.	Lot 8, Tagaytay Calamba Rd. Tolentino West / LA 2,156 *w/ Lis Pendens / over looking Taal Lake	20,000,000

COMM'L. / AGRI'L.
(SUBJECT TO CREDIT APPROVAL)

	PARANAQUE CITY	MIN BID
	Dama De Noche St. United Indl. (UPS-IV) Sn Dionisio.	
55	Indl Lot w/ Warehouse / Lot 6-A LA 1,803 / FA 1,720 (near Leslie Food)	14,300,000
	Across Chinese Temple along Coastal Rd. Tambo.	
56	Comml Lot, L1 B5, Asiaworld City / LA 1,559 (near Marina)	33,700,000
57	Comml Lot, L2 B5. Asiaworld City / LA 1,400 (nr Marina)	32,200,000
	MAKATI CITY	**MIN BID**
	Brgy. Pinagkaisahan, nr EDSA, Kalayaan & The Fort	
58	Comm'l / Res'l Lot / L 16 B 14, # 3904 Quingua St/LA204 (beside Forbes Park)	5,500,000
59	Comm'l / Res'l Lot / L 17 B 14, # 3904 Quingua St/LA204 (beside Forbes Park)	5,500,000
60	Comm'l / Res'l Lot / L 18 B 14. # 3904 Quingua St/LA204 (beside Forbes Park)	5,500,000
	# 1656 Penafrancia cor D. Oliman Sts. Valenzuela	
61.	Condo w/ prkng / Kikusui Star Condo, Unit G-A / FA 93 (on lease)	3,100,000
62	Condo w/ prkng / Kikusui Star Condo Unit G-B / FA 85 (on lease)	2,800,000
	Millenium Plaza- Mktl. Ave cor Eduque St	
63	Condo Unit / 5/F. FA 261	17,765,000
	QUEZON CITY – Libis	**MIN BID**
	IBM Plaza,Eastwood City-beside Citibank	
64	Office Condominium w/ parking Unit 8-A / FA 166	8,000,000
	QUEZON CITY	**MIN BID**
65	Building / Lots 8 & 9 Blk S 27 Timog Ave LA 1,380 FA 1,500 (nr Unionbank Timog Br & GMA-7) (with monthly Lease)	70,000,000
66	W'house / 185 Roosevelt Ave S F Del Monte / LA 5,641 / FA 3,454	140,000,000
	MUNTINLUPA CITY	**MIN BID**
67	Comml Condo Unit/Unit 1908, 19th flr, Richville Corporate Tower Alabang-Zapote Rd, Madrigal Bus Park Alabang / FA-59	3,700,000
	VALENZUELA CITY	**MIN BID**
68	Indl Lot w/ 2 Whses (14&16) Barracks, Canteen,Guard'hse Lot 1075 D 1 C, Plastic City # 6 T. Santiago St, Canumay-West / LA 9,923 / FA 7,096	39,703,000
69	Industrial Lot / Lot 382 C Plastic City Housing,Canumay LA 25,798 (via T Santiago & Pinagbayanan Sts)	45,000,000
	CAVITE - Tanza, Bo. Tres Cruces	**MIN BID**
	nr Transville Subd, via Trece Martires	
70	Agri Lot / Lot-2931 (Rs-1273) LA 40,127 * w/ Adverse Claim & No Right Of Way	5,000,000
	TARLAC CITY – Poblacion	**MIN BID**
	Panganiban St. - across iceplant	
71.	Lot / Lot 4 A 1 / LA 373	5,390,000
72	Lot / Lot 4 A 2 / LA 373	5,390,000
	NUEVA ECIJA - Cab. City	**MIN BID**
	# 529 Pag-Asa, Daan Sarili (near L.T.O.)	
73	Agri Lot / Lot 3B / LA 37,041	2,366,000
74	Whse&Offc/Lot 2H/LA 2,260/F Lot 2H / LA 2,260 / FA 580	5,098,000

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VICTORIA QUIRINO de DELGADO

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1948 – 1954

She is survived by her husband, Don Francisco C. Delgado; her children: Marivic and Allen, Ruby and Karl, Marissa and Leo, and Louie Gonzalez; her step children: Ma. Isabel, Ricardo, Josemari and Susie, Franco and Ros Ros, Federico, and Ana Maria; her grandchildren: Victoria and Gonzalo, Maria, Lucia and Marcos, Marco and Giselle, Isabella, and Audrey; her great grandchildren: Bruno, Victoria, Lucas, and Sofia.

Her body lies in state at the Capilla del Señor, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati.

Requiem Mass will be on December 5, 2006 at nine o'clock in the morning at the Santuario de San Antonio. Interment will follow at Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque .

In lieu of flowers, donations to the President Elpidio Quirino Foundation will be appreciated.

Message of Thanks

from the Family of

Stanley Lavastilla Abellana

To all our relatives, friends, associates and colleagues, we would like to express our deepest gratitudes for all your kind words, comforting presence, prayers and generous support.

You have lightened our grief and we thank you for your concern.

Message of Thanks

We, the children of the late

Meneleo T. Lopez

(of Pangasinan and Lipa City)

who passed away on November 5, 2006

express our sincerest gratitude to all relatives and friends who comforted us in our time of bereavement and offered prayers, masses, flowers, and other expressions of sympathy.

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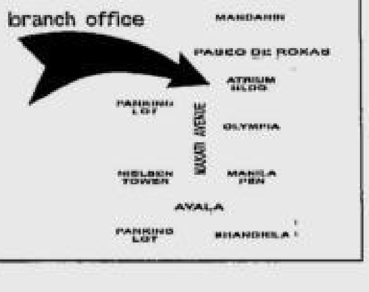

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DEATH NOTICE

JOSELITO D. NARCISO

Peacefully joined our Lord on November 1, 2006 at the age of 44.

His remains lie in state at No. 96 Sampaloc St., Libtong, Meycauayan, Bulacan.

Interment today, December 3, 2006, 2:00 p.m. at Pandayan Memorial Park, Meycauayan, Bulacan.

ERLINDA JO TAN

(of Santa Cruz, Marinduque)

Peacefully joined the Lord on November 30, 2006 at the age of 78.

Her bereaved family: Husband **Tan Suy Hong** (†); children: **Anesia**, **Eugene** (†) and **Susan**, **Loreto** and **Remedios**, **Ceferino** (†) and **Helen**, **Antonio** and **Baby Linda**, **Myrna**, **Ricardo** (†); grandchildren, and great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Chapel Superior New Bldg. La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Monday, December 4, 2006, 1:00 p.m. at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

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John 14:6

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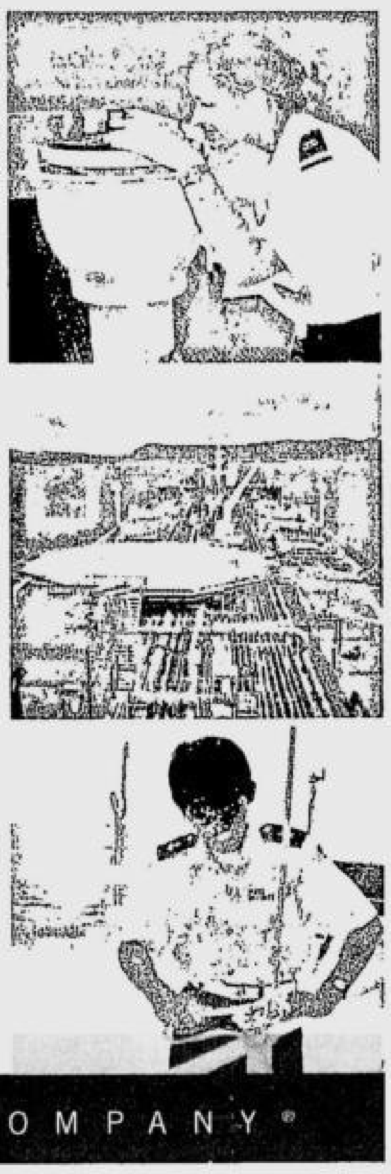

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For more details visit our offices:

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Tel. No. (02) 928-8389/925-5241
Fax No. (02) 9288479
Email: **cimscmla@speed.info.com.ph**

Branch Office:
No. 19-E, Arthur Street
West Bajac-Bajac, Olongapo City
Tel. No. (047) 222-2275/223-3556
Fax No. (047) 223-3230
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POEA License No. 206-LB-072503-R

NO FEES TO BE COLLECTED
THIS AD IS ALLOWED UNDER MC-2/BEWARE OF ILLEGAL RECRUITERS

Procurement and Contracts Assistant

Responsibilities

The position, under the supervision of the Specialist in charge, is responsible for attending to the efficient procurement administration, deliveries, payment control, and database maintenance.

For more details about the position, please see http://www.adb.org/Employment/Local/default.asp

Reporting Arrangement

The position reports to Director, designated professional staff and/or national officer in the Procurement and Contracts Administration Section (OAIS-PC).

Selection Criteria

Specific criteria include

- Suitability to undertake the responsibilities mentioned above at the required level.
- Bachelor's degree in Commerce, Business Administration, or other relevant course.
- At least three year's work experience.
- Familiar with procurement planning (procurement lead time, determining material priorities and delivery dates), procurement control (proper recording and timely processing of requisitions), implementation of procurement related programs (market research, sourcing of suppliers, etc.).
- Basic knowledge of the policies, guidelines and procedures in procurement of supplies, equipment, goods, and other items prevalent in multilateral organizations.
- Preferably has working knowledge of the procurement system under the Oracle environment.
- Basic knowledge of computer applications such as MS Word, MS Excel, MS Powerpoint and Lotus Notes.

The Asian Development Bank's vision is a region free of poverty. Established in 1966 and headquartered in Manila, Philippines, ADB's multicultural staff come from about 50 member countries. ADB's Headquarters in Manila generally recruits its administrative staff locally from the Philippines. The position is for a three-year fixed-term appointment. ADB offers a highly competitive salary and benefits package applicable to local staff. While the position advertised is for ADB Headquarters in Manila, Philippines, ADB staff must be prepared to serve in any location outside its Headquarters at the discretion of Management.

Apply electronically, quoting **Ref. No. EXT-AS06-267(4)-OAIS-PC** and **job title** on subject line and attaching application form available on www.adb.org/Employment/appform.asp to e-mail address: CS-jobs@adb.org by **15 December 2006.**

Due to the expected large number of applications, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Applications lacking the job reference number and job title or using the wrong e-mail address will not be considered.

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I am:		
Competitive & Dynamic	☐	☐
Self-Driven and Ambitious	☐	☐
Personable but Assertive	☐	☐
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mktg@jaguar.com.ph

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e-mail: recruitment@crewserve.com.ph
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Galant Maritime Services, Inc.
1101 Ermita Center Building
1350 Roxas Boulevard,
Ermita, Manila
PIC: C/M Norman Miranda
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For inquiries or submission of resume, contact the following:

Able Advertising Agency
Unit 8 Bohol Mansion, # 43 Sgt Esquerra St., Quezon City
Phone: 413.66.25 / able.ad.agency@gmail.com
Or submit to security guard of Port Royal Building, Rada St., Makati City

'Making Administrative Investigation and Grievance Handling Work'

THE CHALLENGE FOR human resources practitioners and frontline supervisors is to be fair in dealing with people concerns. Proper conduct of administrative investigation and handling of grievances makes fairness in the workplace a reality and enhances supervisor-subordinate partnership.

It is in this light that the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) is conducting a one-day Course on Making Administrative Investigation and Grievance Handling Work.

To be held on 5 Dec., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Ecop Training Center, this Course will enable human resource practitioners and supervisors to devote their time to strategic work principles and basic skills.

Topics to be covered by the Course include The Labor Management Framework; Situating the Administrative Investigation and Grievance Handling; Due Process and Just Authorized Causes; Progressive Discipline: Code of Ethics and Company Rules and Regulations; Employee Discipline to be Effective: Hot Stove Technique; Administrative Investigation: Elements, Process, Script and Documentation; Grievance Handling: Steps and Do's and Don'ts, Documentation; and Role Plays.

For inquiries, please call Dino Eloriaga of the Ecop Training and Development Department at 890-4845, 890-4847 or 899-0411.

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Architects - Licensed Architect with at least 3 years experience in construction management and supervision of finishing works for buildings; must be computer literate.

Those interested may e-mail their resume with the latest photo to mlvcconsult@yahoo.com or mail to MLVC Engineers & Consultants, 268 Date Palm Street, Palmera Hills I, Ortigas Ave. Extn., 1920 Taytay, Rizal

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An Amusement Manufacturer is in urgent need of the following:

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1. Male / Female, Accounting Graduate
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Tel. Nos. 372-8701 to 03

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A printing company is in need of an office clerk, female, 21-30 years old, knowledgeable in computer, preferably a graduate of business related course. For more details, please call 255-5035.

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RP supports proposed establishment of int'l fund for emergency evacuation of migrant workers

THE PHILIPPINES WILL STRONGLY SUPPORT a proposal for the establishment of an international fund for the emergency evacuation of migrant workers as it leads a key, high-level plenary discussion on global migration at the 92nd session of the Governing Body of the 120-country International Organization for Migration (IOM) at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland from Nov. 28 to Dec. 1.

Labor and Employment Secretary Arturo D. Brion, who is representing the Philippines, said the high level IOM plenary discussion centers on the 92nd session's unifying theme, *"Partnerships in Migration: Engaging Business and Civil Society,"* which had been the core feature of the successive IOM sessions since 2001.

Brion, in the course of the crucial discussion, is expected to highlight the Philippines' internationally acclaimed migration management model for the productive engagement, protection, and welfare of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), from their deployment in host economies up to their reintegration to their country's socio-economic mainstream on their return.

Brion is also expected to take up the concern on disadvantaged migrants in support of the establishment of an emergency evacuation fund in the case of eventualities, citing the IOM's earlier joint effort hand-in-hand with the Philippine government in successfully repatriating OFWs affected by the recent conflict in Lebanon.

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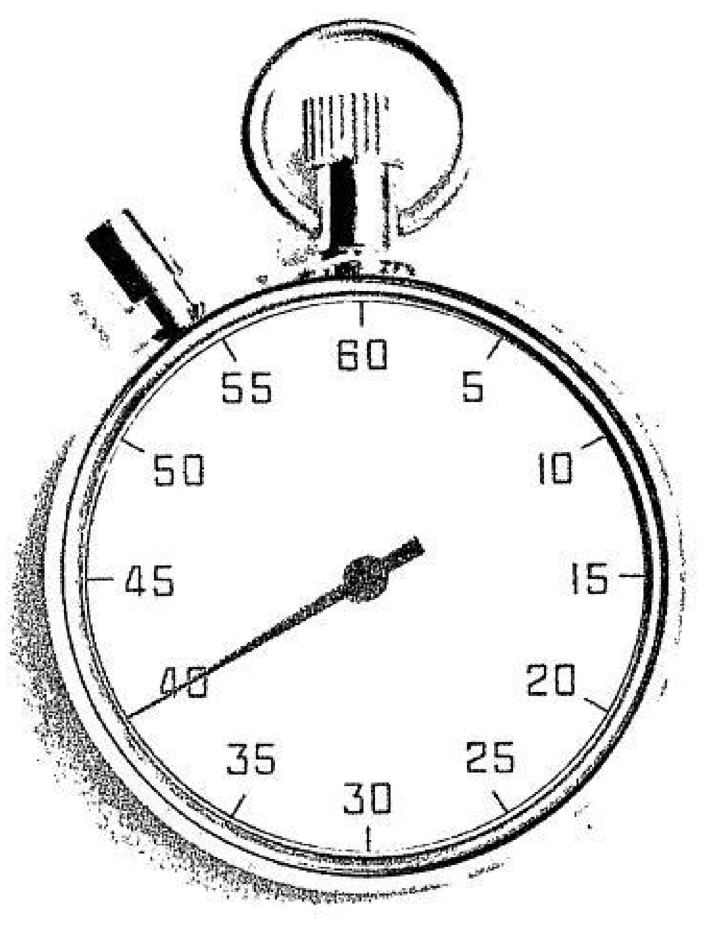

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Customer Contact Agents.

Whether you are a call center professional, someone looking for a new challenge or a recent college graduate, get your career off to a great start.

We're looking for 4-year degree holders with excellent communications skills for our inbound and outbound contact center operations. As a customer contact agent at Accenture, you will provide technical support or handle billing inquiries for our inbound customer service account for an ISP company. Or if you have outbound or financial services experience, you may be assigned to handle our outbound collections account for a utilities company based in UK.

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Visit our website to take our online test right now or join our in-house job fair on December 4 to 8, 10am to 3pm at 3rd Level, Robinsons Pioneer Mall, Pioneer St., Mandaluyong City. You could walk away with a new job on the same day!

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Waitress – 19-25 years old

Interested applicants must submit their Resumé at the NKIEMPC office, 3rd floor, NKTI Bldg., East Avenue, Quezon City • 9286893 or 9243601 Loc. 3124

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Garments Manufacturer in Bagbaguin, Valenzuela is looking for a

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☐ Male at least 25 years old
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☐ Willing to be trained

Interested applicants may call up 983-7475 look for Ness or Ruth.
Or fax resumé at 983-6921

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- With at least 2 years extensive exposure and experience in credit handling, evaluation & financial analysis (consumer & commercial loans).
- With strong analytical, marketing & client handling skills.
- With excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Proficient in Microsoft Office applications
- Completion of company and other management training programs in the field is a plus.

Interested parties may submit their application letter, resumé and other related documents to:
LBC BANK 809 J.P. Rizal St. Makati City or email to hr@lbcbank.ph
For inquiries, call 899-8686-89 local 304 & look for Ms. Daisy or Ms. Dash

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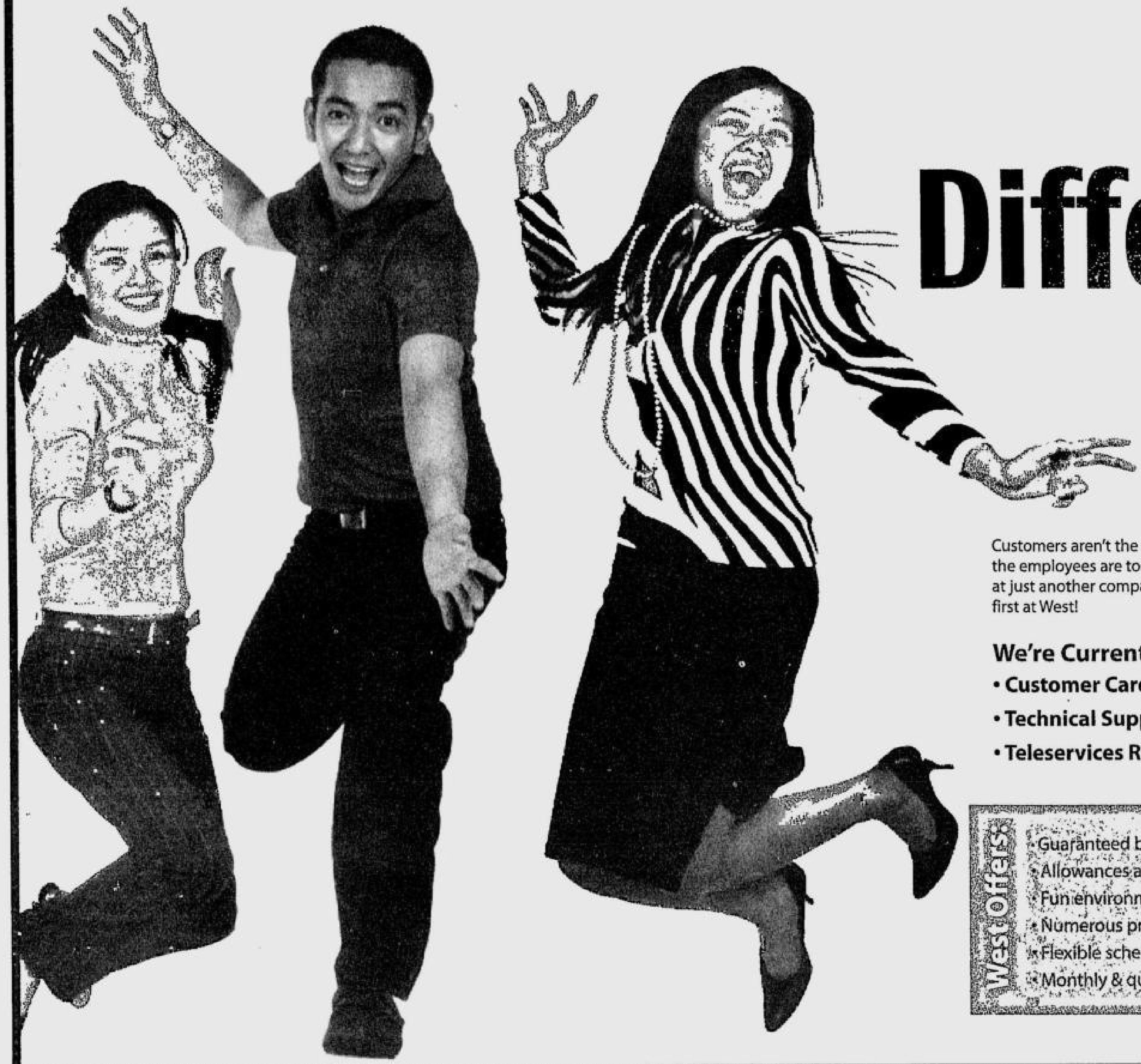

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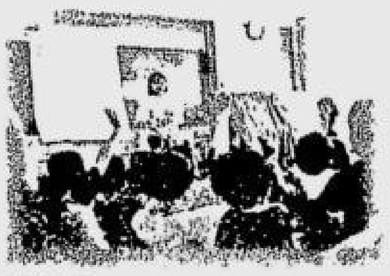

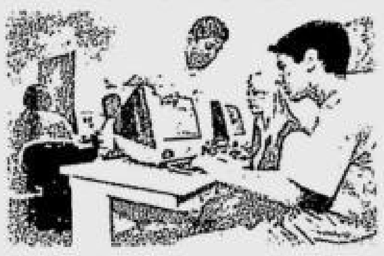

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Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Ave., Makati City

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- * Government Officials and
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Program

7:30 - 8:00	Registration
8:00 - 8:40	Opening Remarks Emerico O. De Guzman, FPM President, PMAP Grace Abella-Zata Conference Chair
8:40 – 9:10	The Philippine Competitiveness Roadmap
9:10 – 9:40	Investment Trends at PEZA: Implications for Employment Lilia De Lima, Director General , PEZA
9:40 – 10:10	Employment Opportunities and Academe-Industry Partnerships in Knowledge Process Outsourcing Caesar O.V. Parlade, General Manager, Deutsche Knowledge Services PTE
10:10 – 10:40	Private Education Initiatives to Address Opportunities and Gaps Vincent Fabella, COCOPEA President
10:40 – 11:10	The Filipino Advantage Benedict Hernandez General Manager, E-Telecare
11:10 – 11:40	Do Young People Have a Future in the Philippines? Dianna Karenina Chebat Winner, Battle of the Business Plans Entrepreneurial Idol of the World, Harvard University, USA
11:40 - 12:00	Open Forum
1:00 - 4:00	Concurrent Sessions
4:00 - 5:00	Integration

Confirmed Speakers for Concurrent Sessions:

Dr. Ramon Sales, CICT Chairman
Mitch Locsin, Executive Director, Business Process Outsourcing Association of the Philippines
Dr. Isagani Cruz, Head, Teacher's Academy, FEU
Philip Macahilig, Head of Sales, Del Monte Phils.
John Philip Orbeta, Managing Director, Ayala Corporation
Dean Conrad Inigo, CEU and CHED Technical Group for Business
Ramon Medina, CHED Technical Group for HR
Irwin Alcala, Dir. for Learning and Development, Laya Mananghaya and Company
Robert Poblete, VP, Jollibee Foods Corporation
Esple Alvez, Dir. of Human Resources, Philippine Plaza
Rene Gener, VP-HRMD, Honda Philippines
Dr. Bonifacio Doma, EVP, Academic Affairs, Mapua Institute of Technology
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■ Customer Service Representatives / Reservation Sales Agents (English or Spanish)

Job summary

- Represents the Company by coordinating all aspects of Priority Club Programs and serves as liaison between the guest and hotels in order to maintain member satisfaction
- Delivers Individualized Customer Experiences by focusing on finding hotel accommodations that will best fit our guests needs

Requirements

- Must be a Bachelor/College degree holder
- Must have excellent written and verbal communication skills with one of the following languages: English / Spanish
- Customer service and/or sales experience an advantage
- Education and experience in the hospitality or IT industry an advantage
- Must be willing to work on a rotating shift

■ Reporting Analysts

Job summary

- Supports strategic and tactical marketing and business issues for global clients
- Provides analytical support on operational and program structure issues for marketing programs
- Provides analysis and reporting for ongoing and adhoc projects
- Assists in compiling lists of email and direct mail recipients based on statistical models built by senior consultants using SAS querying tool

Requirements

- Must have a degree in Business, Marketing, Statistics, Economics or related field
- At least 2 years working with relational decision-support databases (preferably a data warehousing environment), along with demonstrated quantitative skills
- Strong experience with SAS and other data processing tools like Business Objects.
- Must be able to prioritize and handle multiple projects
- Must be able to communicate technical information to non-technical audiences
- Must be able to work with minimal supervision

■ Workforce Analysts

Job summary

- Tracks and updates workforce management and schedule adherence data to enable effective real-time staffing decisions, and real-time call routing
- Ensures current staffing matches the schedule and reconciles any differences
- Reports agent schedule adherence and agent exceptions back to various departments for agent level tracking and reporting

Requirements

- Must be a Bachelor/College Degree holder
- Knowledge of call center methodology, which includes random call arrival and call queuing theory, terminology and definitions an advantage
- Must have exceptional computer skills with an emphasis in MS Excel
- Must have effective written and verbal communication skills for the purpose of obtaining and conveying information to internal and external clients
- Must be willing to work on a rotating shift

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The **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles.

ICRC

The ICRC's sub-delegation in Mindanao is looking for suitable candidates to fill the following vacancy: The position is based in Zamboanga City.

FIELD OFFICER

Main tasks:

The Field Officer will assist the delegate in running field activities mainly for Zamboanga Peninsula and Sulu Archipelagos. He/She will:

- Participate in the assessment and monitoring of the humanitarian situation in the area and general economic/ security situation;
- Assist in the implementation of relief and assistance activities;
- Support the ICRC in promoting and disseminating the principles of International Humanitarian Law, as well as in monitoring its respect;
- Assist in establishing and maintaining contacts with various actors, including individual beneficiaries, humanitarian organizations, local authorities, and the Philippines National Red Cross.

Selection requirements:

- University degree or
- Solid professional experience in similar fields of activities, experience in humanitarian work; experience as trainer/disseminator/facilitate or highly desirable.
- Fluency in spoken and written English, Tagalog and Visayan and good knowledge of Muslim dialects.
- Familiarity with Zamboanga Peninsula and Sulu archipelagos' geographical area and cultural context.
- Good knowledge of computer and windows package (MS Word, Excel & PowerPoint)
- Good communication, negotiation and interpersonal skills, with the ability to work in a multi-cultural environment;
- Well organized and analytical, able to plan work assignments, evaluate and integrate information from different sources and assess situations;
- Good sense of responsibility and ability to work also independently;
- Able to work under pressure and cope with stress, also in insecure areas.
- Valid driver's license and excellent driving skills.

Assets:

- Previous experience working within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and/or other international humanitarian organisations,
- Strongly motivated to humanitarian work

What we offer:

- Good compensation
- Interesting, rewarding work
- Humanitarian and international environment

Qualified applicants are requested to submit their comprehensive resume, recent NBI clearance and explain in their covering letter their motivation and interest in the position as well as salary expectation to the address below not later than **15 December 2006** to:

The Administrator, ICRC, 4th Floor, Central Plaza1 Bldg., J. P. Laurel Ave., Davao City Or by e-mail to: icrcdavao@yahoo.com.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

The **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles.

ICRC

The ICRC's delegation is looking for suitable candidates to be based in Davao City to fill the following vacancy:

LIVELIHOOD FIELD OFFICER

(micro-economic initiatives)

Main tasks:

The Livelihood F/O will implement the new livelihood programme component of ICRC that starts in January 2007. It consists of at least five micro-economic projects in Mindanao, Luzon and the Visayas and focuses on in kind contributions supporting conflict-affected communities in their efforts to recover from the impact of conflict.

He/She will:

- implement mainly the agriculture-oriented livelihood projects and be responsible for the day to day running
- contribute strongly to the whole programme development and project management cycle
- carry out assessments of conflict-affected communities and analyze the impact on the agriculture and the livelihood strategies of the population
- give technical input regarding all agriculture related issues for the ICRC in the Philippines

Selection requirements:

- Bachelor or Master's degree in Agronomy or Agriculture and courses in Animal Science and Development Studies
- At least two years experience in similar position focusing on in kind contributions (as opposed to in cash)
- Familiar with different livelihood frameworks and able to carry out assessments analyzing the impact of conflict on livelihood strategies of a given population
- Knows well the different Philippine regions, ethnic groups and their cultural traits
- Good command of English, Tagalog, Visayan, written and spoken
- Good analytical skills, ability to write summary reports
- Good team spirit, leadership skills and ability to work in a multicultural and multidisciplinary team
- Prepared to work independently travel extensively in an insecure environment
- Good knowledge of computer and windows package
- With driving experience and valid driver's licence

Assets:

- Previous experience in micro-financing, voucher and/or grants programmes
- Able to speak languages of Muslim ethnic groups

What we offer:

- Good Compensation
- Interesting, rewarding work
- Position open for one year, likely to be extended
- Humanitarian and international environment

Qualified applicants are requested to submit their comprehensive resume, recent NBI clearance and explain in their covering letter their motivation and interest in the position as well as salary expectation to the address below not later than December 11, 2006 to:

The Administrator, ICRC, 4th floor, Central Plaza 1 Bldg., J. P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City, Philippines. Or by email to: icrcdavao@yahoo.com.

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Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

Are my subordinates having too much fun at work?

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice
For the Anxious Person at Work

I SUPERVISE FIVE YOUNG people who are fresh entrants into the work force. They are dedicated and enthusiastic about their work and eager to learn. My superior talked to me that my subordinates seem to be having too much fun. What should I do? Is working and having fun incompatible in the workplace? Personally, I think if people are serious all the time, they can get easily tired and burnt out. What do you think? Please advice.

Concerned Supervisor

Thanks for your letter. Your superior has called your attention that your subordinates seem to be having too much fun at work. This remark you have taken as something negative and therefore desire to do something about it.

I think it is tougher to develop a fun atmosphere at work than work towards achieving a balance of fun and achieving business results. We need fun at work. When people enjoy their work, they can become more productive and they are likely to stay longer with the company.

I remember working for a boss who was always serious. He would keep on working on a long task list whenever we talk. I would consider those years pure drudgery. Of course they developed in me the virtues of patience and temperance. Our group was a talented one. What a pity, we could have given much more to the organization.

Flow state

Today, when talking about keeping the work force engaged, the key issue is how much discretionary effort the employee is releasing. Typically if there are no efforts to improve productivity and motivation, an employee gives only 50 to 60 percent of his potential contribution.

But if a person enjoys his work, he gets into a "flow state" where his enjoyment of work and feeling of meaningful contribution encourages him to go for a 100 percent and beyond.

Now I am not dismissing the remark of your superior as irrelevant or unimportant. What you need to do is to look at present task achievement and results of your team. Is your team underachieving, meeting or exceeding targets? Find ways to channel the fun towards the achievement of results.

Then work with your team to find ways of having fun that are not counterproductive during working hours. Some fun activities may distract or disturb people from focusing on their work. Direct them to have fun especially during break times. Today's workplace is often stressful. There is the amount of work that needs to get done with speed. Or people may be doing multiple tasks with enriched job descriptions. Then again customers today are more demanding and expecting of quality service. If people have fun during break times, this enables the stress-recovery cycle to occur. The likelihood of people reaching a level of negative stress or distress at work is reduced.

Then take the initiative to create small events to celebrate success and achievement, birthday celebrants for the month etc. As Filipinos we are used to finding occasions to celebrate.

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

In the book, "Managing to Have Fun" by Matt Wein-stein, the author traces the innate discomfort of traditional business towards fun, "Work is not supposed to be fun. That is why it is called work. Work and play are opposites like Love and War."

He proposes that it is the absence of the human side of business that depletes employee morale and contributes to job dissatisfaction and burnout. And the opposite is true, by humanizing the workplace you create a sense of heart and soul in the organization.

Putting fun in work

If you are a manager or supervisor who wants to put fun in the workplace Wein-stein proposes four principles:

One, think about the specific people involved, what motivates and drives them? "Different strokes for different folks." Look at what is already happening in the workplace. You may simply need to build on what is naturally occurring. The better you know people the easier you can find the more effective and appropriate ways to use fun for reward, recognition and renewal.

Two, lead by example. People in the company look up to leadership for clues as to proper behavior. As a manager, loosen up yourself. Take time to reflect on your style. How comfortable are you with having fun at work? Start at the level of fun that comes naturally to you, then move towards continuous improvement.

Three, if you don't get personal satisfaction from what you are doing, it is not worth doing. Having fun at work benefits the manager, too. When you take time to celebrate success of your employees and enjoy work you gain through the feeling of emotional connectedness with your team. This improves one's personal well-being.

Four, change takes time. Be patient with yourself. You can start with small events that give the clear message that you are learning to celebrate and publicly appreciate employees and their [illegible] have fun at work.

(The author is CEO of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, a [illegible] consulting company.)

Gospel. Lk 21:25-28, 34-36

"...Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man."

Preparing for the end

By Bishop Precioso D. Cantillas, SDB, DD

MOST WORKERS FEEL SO BURDENED WITH THE week-long workload that towards the end of the week they would sigh with great relief and say "Thank God it's Friday." The monotony of the job, difficulties it sometimes presents, and perhaps even the anxieties its demands are creating in the worker could make the latter want so much the weekend break which could offer him something more enjoyable. So, there would be the tendency for the over exhausted worker to just splurge on the weekend either with his coworkers or his family. But then the weekend fun would sometimes be too tiring and expensive that the next day for work would be a "blue Monday" for the worker and working would be for him a means to "pay for the bills." Thus, the cycle of week-long work and weekend enjoyment would seem to be the lot of many workers.

But there seems to be a greater meaning in this day to day occurrence of a worker's life than just a boring, repetitive cycle of events. The week-long hard work could be part of the struggle to attain the lasting happiness which each person is intensely longing for within his heart; daily work teaches us to be "vigilant" not only in the workplace but also in life so that, as Jesus warns us in today's Gospel, we are prepared to "stand before the Son of Man" when the time of life's reckoning finally arrives.

Still, following the advice of Jesus to add prayer to our vigilance in work, the worker could somehow understand the consoling significance of working, and experience the presence of Jesus which gives him more joy and peace than what a weekend break could offer. *(E-mail the author at mfvg@skyinet.net)*

REFLECTIONS FOR THE WORKING SOUL

You are no parasite

By Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS

IF YOU'VE EVER BEEN A SCOUT—GIRL OR BOY—YOU CAN grasp right away the message in today's Gospel: "Be prepared." This scout's motto in fact neatly wraps up in two words the essence of the Gospels these past days—staying awake, for one doesn't know when the end will come.

St. Augustine once said that God created you without you, but He cannot save you without you.In short, you need to work for your salvation as well. You need to keep your house in order, so to speak—to keep your deeds pure, your heart clean and your conscience above reproach and ready for doomsday—you need to cooperate with God.

At a more mundane level, in the workaday world, doomsday could mean sudden unemployment, the untimely death of a breadwinner, or some other tragedy that deprives you of the comfort or security you have been used to. What saves you at this hour is work ethics you have followed and strengthened over the years, a body of principles that serve as a foundation of a work style that can see you through come what may. For a Christian, the building blocks of that foundation are the teachings of Jesus, wholeheartedly observed and obeyed—particularly on fairness, relationships, labor, honesty, self-denial, faith, etc. The vigilance that the Gospel asks of us is actually a way of life and a way of work as well because work is one vital facet of life. With such vigilance, you need not fear unexpected joblessness for your principles will hold you up—there will always be honorable work for you lifting you above starvation or the indignity of being a parasite on the back of the industrious. *(E-mail the author at teresa_de_manila@yahoo.com)*

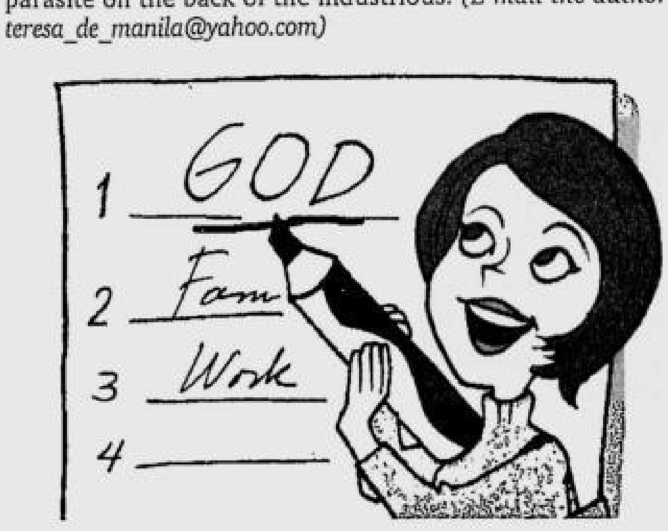

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Finding career bliss

By Aya V. Jallorina
Contributor

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED IF you really love your job? Do you feel you have discovered your true calling being in that job? Is that the right job for you or do you feel like a misfit being there?

My motto has always been: "Ask not what you can do for your job, ask what your job can do for you." Maybe you'll balk at my stark admission. For one, it doesn't sound so nice. It's like being so self-centered, right? My friend Liza, wife of a minister in a fundamentalist church, has advised me to try to work uncomplainingly, to try to ignore any evidence that I'm not being compensated well, despite being overworked and stressed out. I'm always grateful for her advice, but of course, I could be defiant.

Actually, my gauge is simple: Am I happy with what I'm doing? Because if not, I don't hesitate to take back my resumé and flee. Forget security of tenure.

Or maybe because I'm an avid Confucius follower: "Choose work you love and you will never have to work a day in your life." If we don't enjoy what we're doing, how can we be good at it?

So I ask, are you happy with your job? Is it worth keeping?

It took my sister Incar five years as a documentation clerk in a large shipping company before she finally resigned last week (Nov. 15). My mother was appalled, "*Paano ka na?*(What will happen to you?) And why did you not just wait for December *para may* Christmas bonus *ka?*"

But my sister showed no remorse. She said job stress was killing her. "The minute I get to work, I felt like I was being punished in jail. Work, work, work. I couldn't relax. And my boss is so *bagsik* (strict)! *Di ko na kaya* (I cannot take it anymore)."

HELLO GOOD MORNING... HOW MAY I HELP YOU ?
ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

I asked her why she didn't quit earlier, "Gotta make a living, sis. I thought I'll earn and save. What I've accumulated over the years is a huge pile of credit card debt instead," she lamented. "Instead of making a living, I feel like dying—of stress, of demand letters coming from those credit card companies."

Underemployment is the problem, not unemployment.

Raymond, a friend who works in a printing company says his job pays enough to support him. But he is always in debt and isn't ashamed to admit it.

Raymond is categorically an underemployed individual. And there are thousands in the country's labor force who are underemployed. Raymond's salary has never been enough to pay for his living expenses. A bottom-peso job may seem like a means of scraping by, but it's really a noose that's slowly tightening. A low-paying job may make sense if you're living with your parents or a working spouse. Otherwise, underemployment ties up precious time you could be using to gain skills or look for a better job. In the book, "Your Money or Your Life," authors Joe Dominguez and Vicki Robin suggest that you add up all the money you spend on work clothes, restaurant lunches, transportation, entertainment and so on. You'll be surprised to find you are actually spending more money to hold down your job than how much you earned in salary. What to do? Get out of the underemployment circle. Don't be reluctant to let go of that "bait" (your measly paycheck). Go back to school, get a master's degree, then start a new job search.

(Ed's note: It is also important to check your lifestyle. You might be living way beyond your means..)

Don't get stuck in a job that doesn't challenge you.

A friend of mine, a court employee for 10 years now, brags she gets paid doing absolutely nothing. Sounds [illegible]? Wrong.

We humans enjoy life most when we're meeting challenges in whatever we do. As if life weren't problematic enough, we invent hi-tech games, climb mountains, solve crossword puzzles. Of course, a life of overwhelming difficulty can be draining and the same holds true in a job that gives off too much stress and risk. But it's just as bad to be stuck in a job that doesn't challenge you.

Find your passion

If you're stuck in a job you are not passionate about, then it's like you are being poisoned. Detoxify yourself. Identify what you really love doing. Having many interests may confuse you towards the right career path. Again, the gauge is simple: As long as you're doing something you enjoy, you're on the right track. After you've detoxified, you'll be ready to dig a little for your heart's desires. These hints may help discover your passions:

- What do you love to do during idle time?
- When you're in a bookstore or library, which sections draw your attention?
- In school, what were some of the topics you choose to write a paper on?
- What do you daydream most of the time?

Vaguely discontented, silently unfulfilled but you need that job and can't quit? There are a number of reasons why an employee, though aware she is in an imperfect job, can't quit. Here are some common reasons:

- Finding a new job is difficult these days. It's easier to stay where I am.
- This job is a pain, but it's a necessary step to a long-term career plan.
- The thought of changing careers scares me. What if I don't get hired again?
- This is a "transition" job, one that pays the bills while I search—and wait—for the right offer.
- All jobs suck. This is probably as good as it gets.
- I can't quit this job. I'm afraid I'll starve to death if I don't get a job replacement ASAP.

Evidently, fear is what is keeping you stuck in your imperfect job. Your true self—the part of you that is destined for a fulfilling career—does not operate on fear. It runs on enjoyment, fascination and vision. Being fascinated in your job is comforting enough. If fear is keeping you from quitting, you're actually not in a job—you're in a hostage situation. Muster up the courage to leave now, even if you think finding a job is difficult these days. Soon, you'll be happy you did because a better career awaits you.

Personally, I know I have found career bliss when I've stopped dreading getting up on the first day of the working week; when instead of crooning, "Rainy days and Mondays always get me down" I announced to my unbelieving 12-year-old son Shaq, "Thank God it's Monday!"

(The author works as administrative officer in an architectural façade/wall design company. She answers online query on legal matters, particularly those pertaining to labor laws. You can reach her at legalese_aya@yahoo. com)

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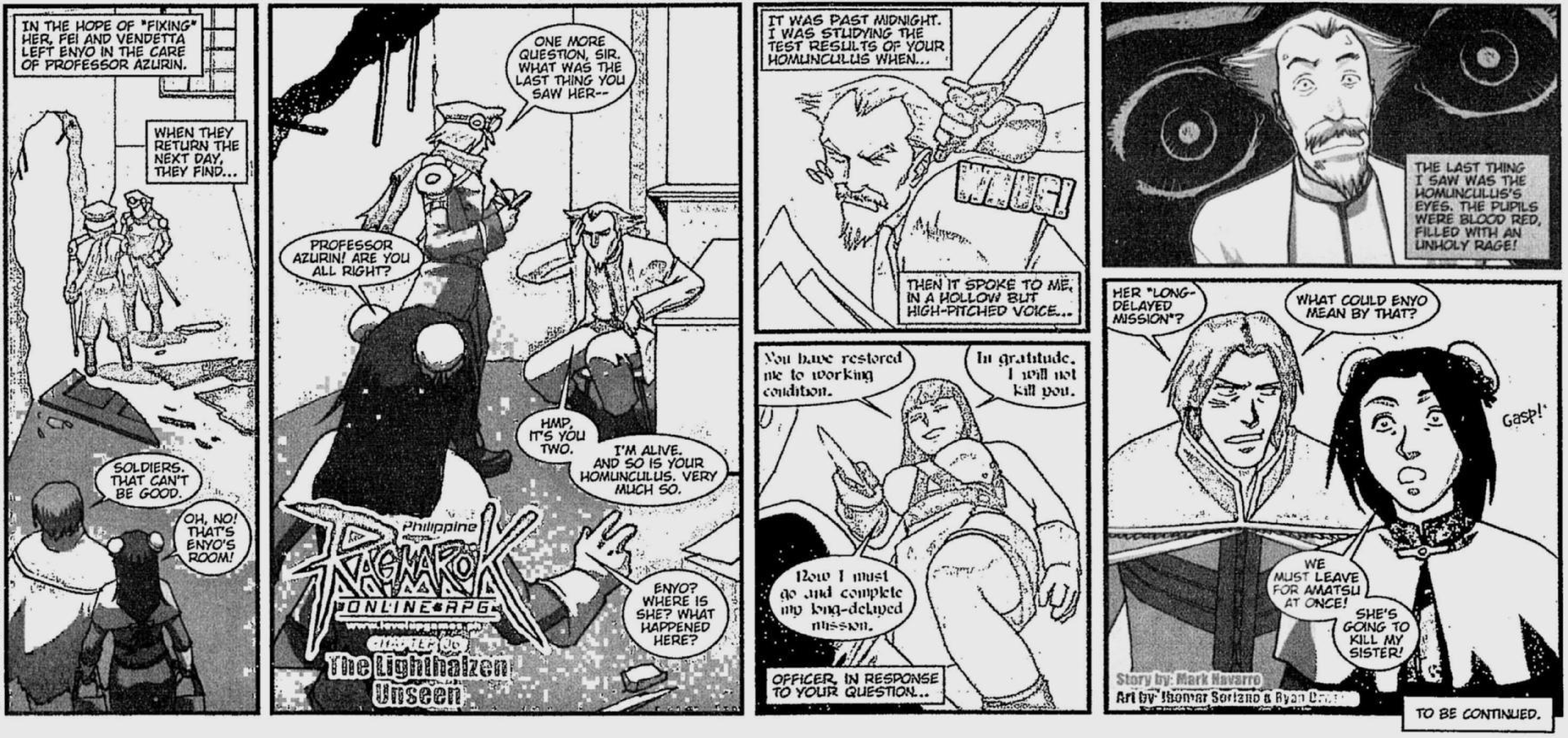
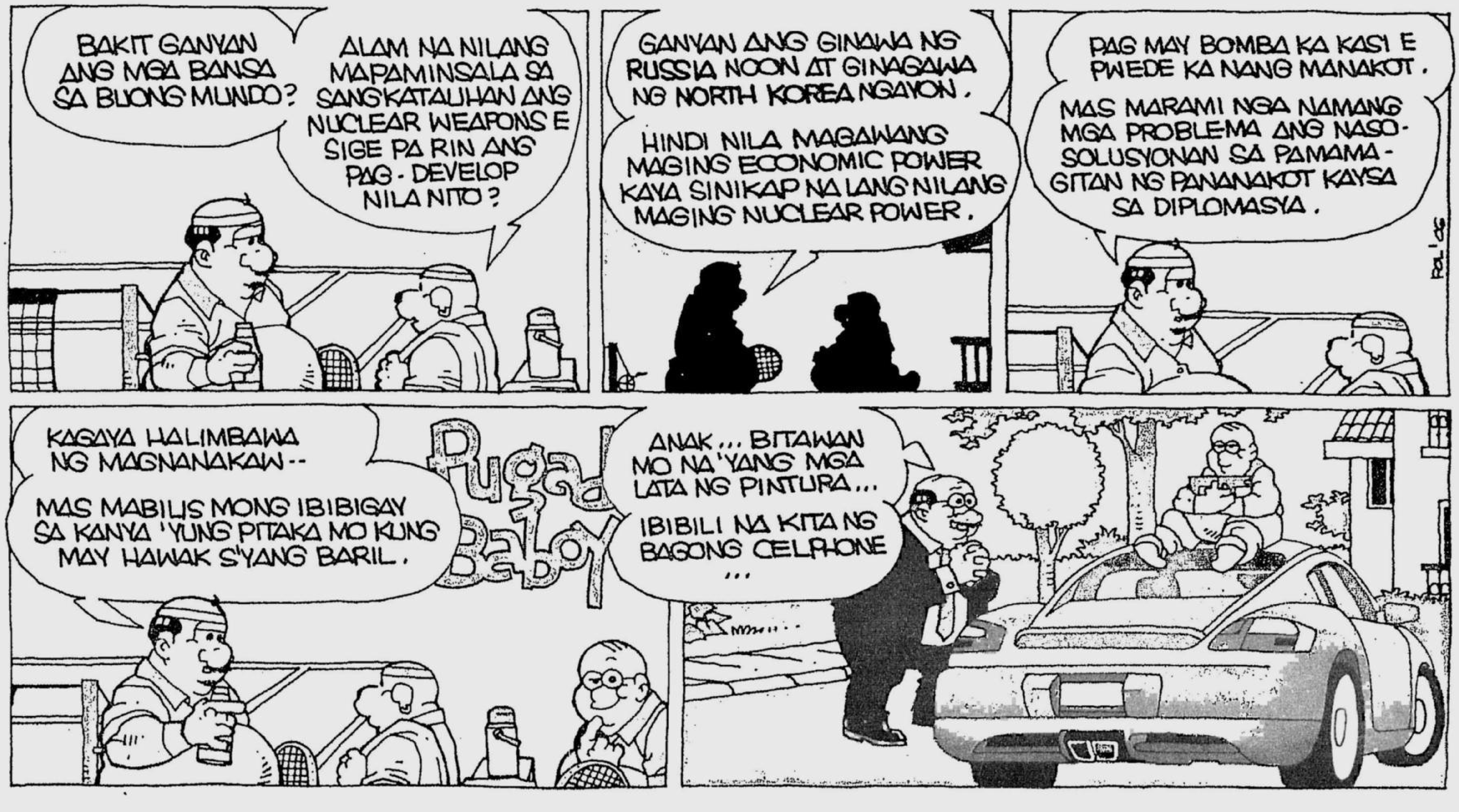

IN THE HOPE OF "FIXING" HER, FEI AND VENDETTA LEFT ENYO IN THE CARE OF PROFESSOR AZURIN.
WHEN THEY RETURN THE NEXT DAY, THEY FIND...
SOLDIERS. THAT CAN'T BE GOOD.
OH, NO! THAT'S ENYO'S ROOM!
ONE MORE QUESTION, SIR. WHAT WAS THE LAST THING YOU SAW HER--
PROFESSOR AZURIN! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
HMP, IT'S YOU TWO.
I'M ALIVE. AND SO IS YOUR HOMUNCULUS. VERY MUCH SO.
ENYO? WHERE IS SHE? WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
Philippine RAGNAROK ONLINE RPG
The Lighthalzen Unseen
IT WAS PAST MIDNIGHT. I WAS STUDYING THE TEST RESULTS OF YOUR HOMUNCULUS WHEN...
WHUG!
THEN IT SPOKE TO ME, IN A HOLLOW BUT HIGH-PITCHED VOICE...
You have restored me to working condition.
In gratitude, I will not kill you.
Now I must go and complete my long-delayed mission.
OFFICER, IN RESPONSE TO YOUR QUESTION...
THE LAST THING I SAW WAS THE HOMUNCULUS'S EYES. THE PUPILS WERE BLOOD RED, FILLED WITH AN UNHOLY RAGE!
HER "LONG-DELAYED MISSION"?
WHAT COULD ENYO MEAN BY THAT?
GASP!
WE MUST LEAVE FOR AMATSU AT ONCE!
SHE'S GOING TO KILL MY SISTER!
Story by: Mark Navarro
Art by: Jhomar Soriano & Ryan D
TO BE CONTINUED.

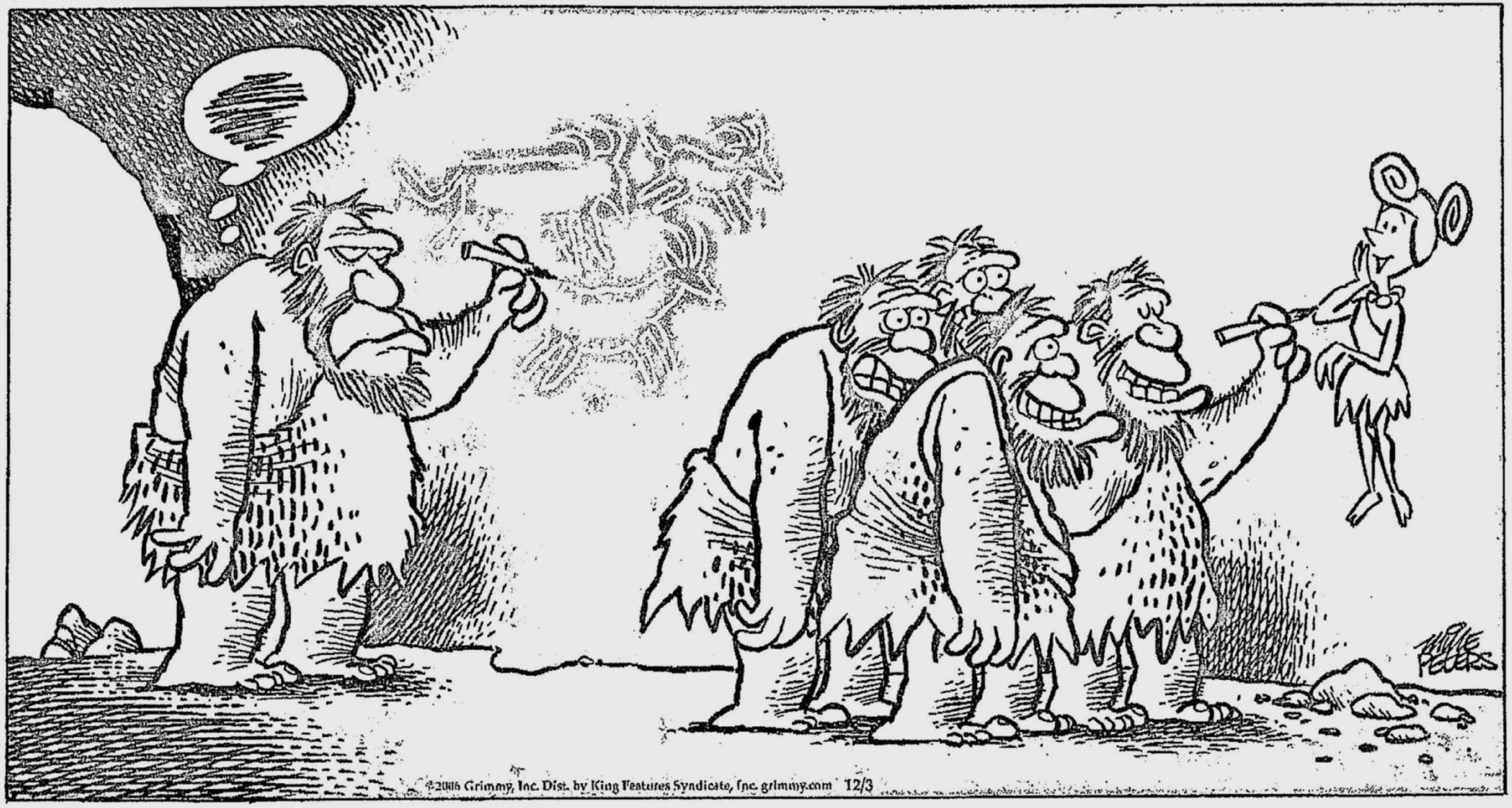
PUGAD BABOY

BY POL MEDINA JR.


BAKIT GANYAN ANG MGA BANSA SA BUONG MUNDO?
ALAM NA NILANG MAPAMINSALA SA SANGKATAUHAN ANG NUCLEAR WEAPONS E SIGE PA RIN ANG PAG-DEVELOP NILA NITO?
GANYAN ANG GINAWA NG RUSSIA NOON AT GINAGAWA NG NORTH KOREA NGAYON.
HINDI NILA MAGAWANG MAGING ECONOMIC POWER KAYA SINIKAP NA LANG NILANG MAGING NUCLEAR POWER.
PAG MAY BOMBA KA KASI E PWEDE KA NANG MANAKOT.
MAS MARAMI NGA NAMANG MGA PROBLEMA ANG NASO-SOLUSYONAN SA PAMAMAGITAN NG PANANAKOT KAYSA SA DIPLOMASYA.
POL '06
KAGAYA HALIMBAWA NG MAGNANAKAW--
MAS MABILIS MONG IBIBIGAY SA KANYA 'YUNG PITAKA MO KUNG MAY HAWAK S'YANG BARIL.
Pugad Baboy
ANAK... BITAWAN MO NA 'YANG MGA LATA NG PINTURA...
IBIBILI NA KITA NG BAGONG CELPHONE...

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


MIKE PETERS
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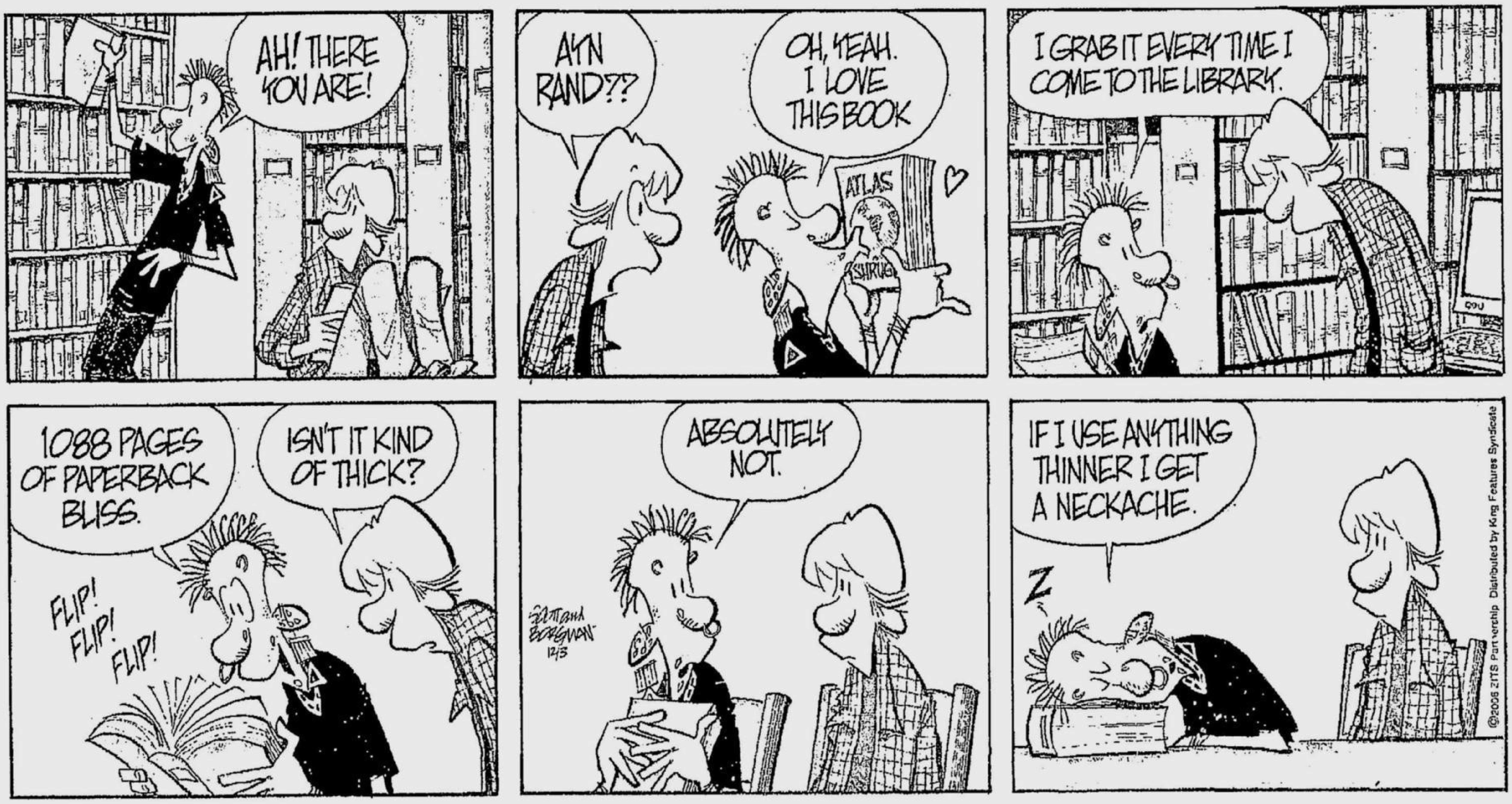
ZITS

BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN


AH! THERE YOU ARE!
AYN RAND??
OH, YEAH. I LOVE THIS BOOK
ATLAS SHRUG
I GRAB IT EVERY TIME I COME TO THE LIBRARY.
1,088 PAGES OF PAPERBACK BLISS.
ISN'T IT KIND OF THICK?
FLIP! FLIP! FLIP!
ABSOLUTELY NOT.
SCOTT AND BORGMAN 12/3
IF I USE ANYTHING THINNER I GET A NECKACHE.
Z
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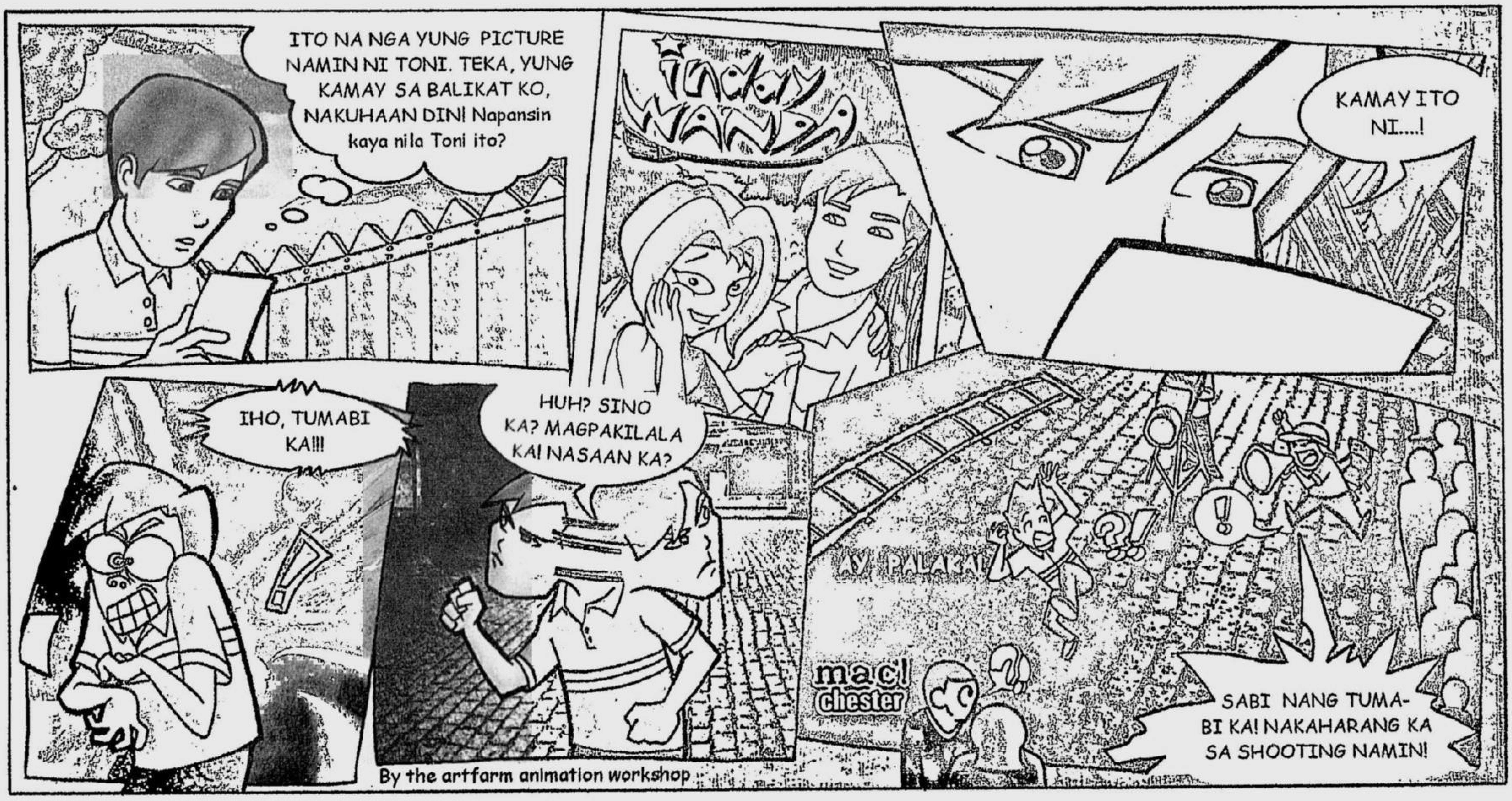
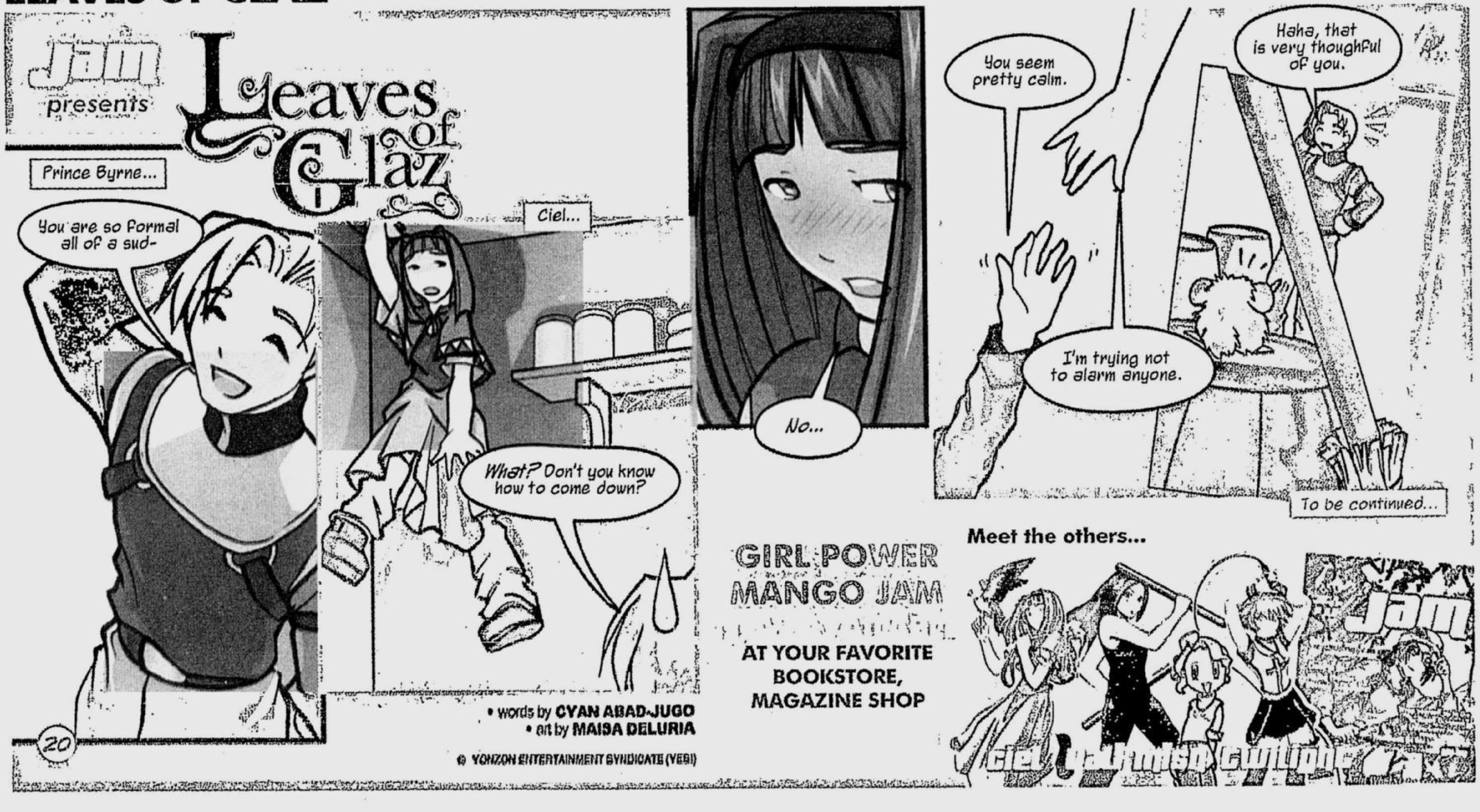
INDAY WANDA

BY BLOG CALIGUIA


ITO NA NGA YUNG PICTURE NAMIN NI TONI. TEKA, YUNG KAMAY SA BALIKAT KO, NAKUHAAN DIN! Napansin kaya nila Toni ito?
Inday Wanda
KAMAY ITO NI....!
IHO, TUMABI KA!!!
HUH? SINO KA? MAGPAKILALA KA! NASAAN KA?
AY PALAKA!
mac! chester
SABI NANG TUMA-BI KA! NAKAHARANG KA SA SHOOTING NAMIN!
By the artfarm animation workshop

LEAVES OF GLAZ

BY MANGO COMICS


Jam presents
Leaves of Glaz
Prince Byrne...
You are so formal all of a sud-
Ciel...
What? Don't you know how to come down?
No...
You seem pretty calm.
Haha, that is very thoughful of you.
I'm trying not to alarm anyone.
To be continued...
20
• words by CYAN ABAD-JUGO
• art by MAISA DELURIA
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MANGO JAM
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Meet the others...
Jam
Ciel

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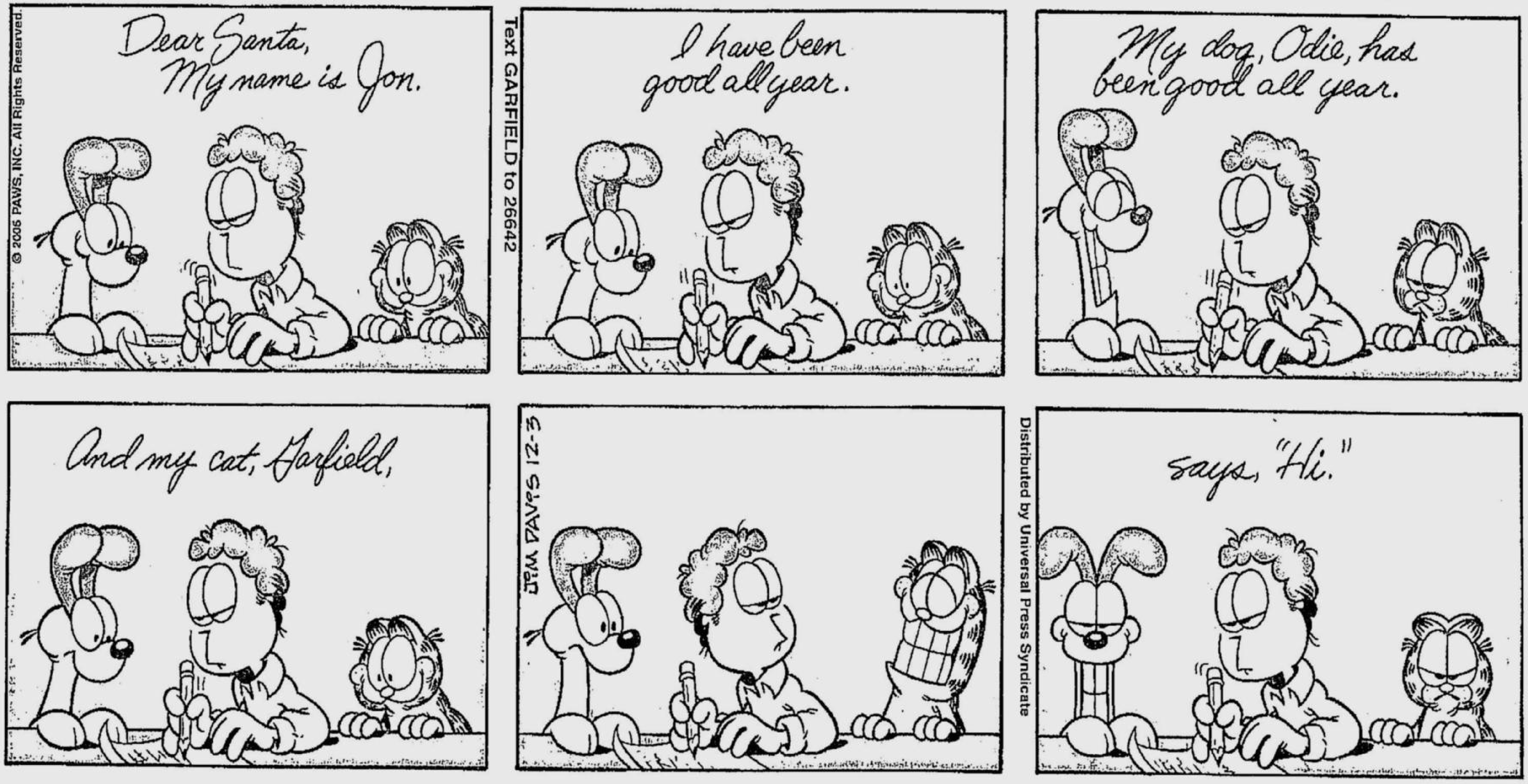
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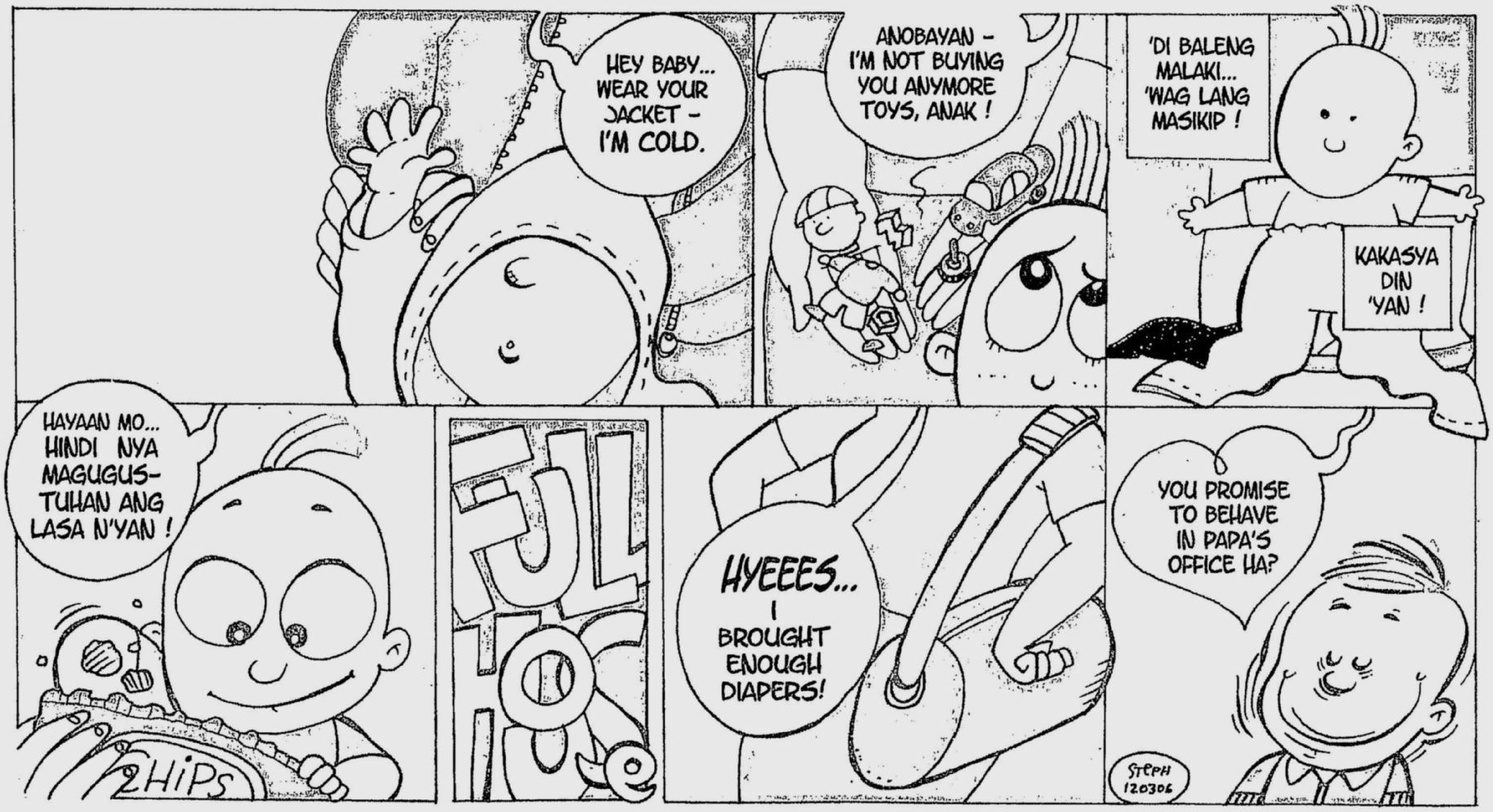
Dear Santa, My name is Jon.
Text GARFIELD to 26642
I have been good all year.
My dog, Odie, has been good all year.
And my cat, Garfield,
JIM DAVIS 12-3
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate
says, "Hi."

FULL HOUSE

BY STEPH BRAVO


HEY BABY... WEAR YOUR JACKET - I'M COLD.
ANOBAYAN - I'M NOT BUYING YOU ANYMORE TOYS, ANAK !
'DI BALENG MALAKI... 'WAG LANG MASIKIP !
KAKASYA DIN 'YAN !
HAYAAN MO... HINDI NYA MAGUGUSTUHAN ANG LASA N'YAN !
CHIPS
HYEEES... I BROUGHT ENOUGH DIAPERS!
YOU PROMISE TO BEHAVE IN PAPA'S OFFICE HA?
STEPH 120306

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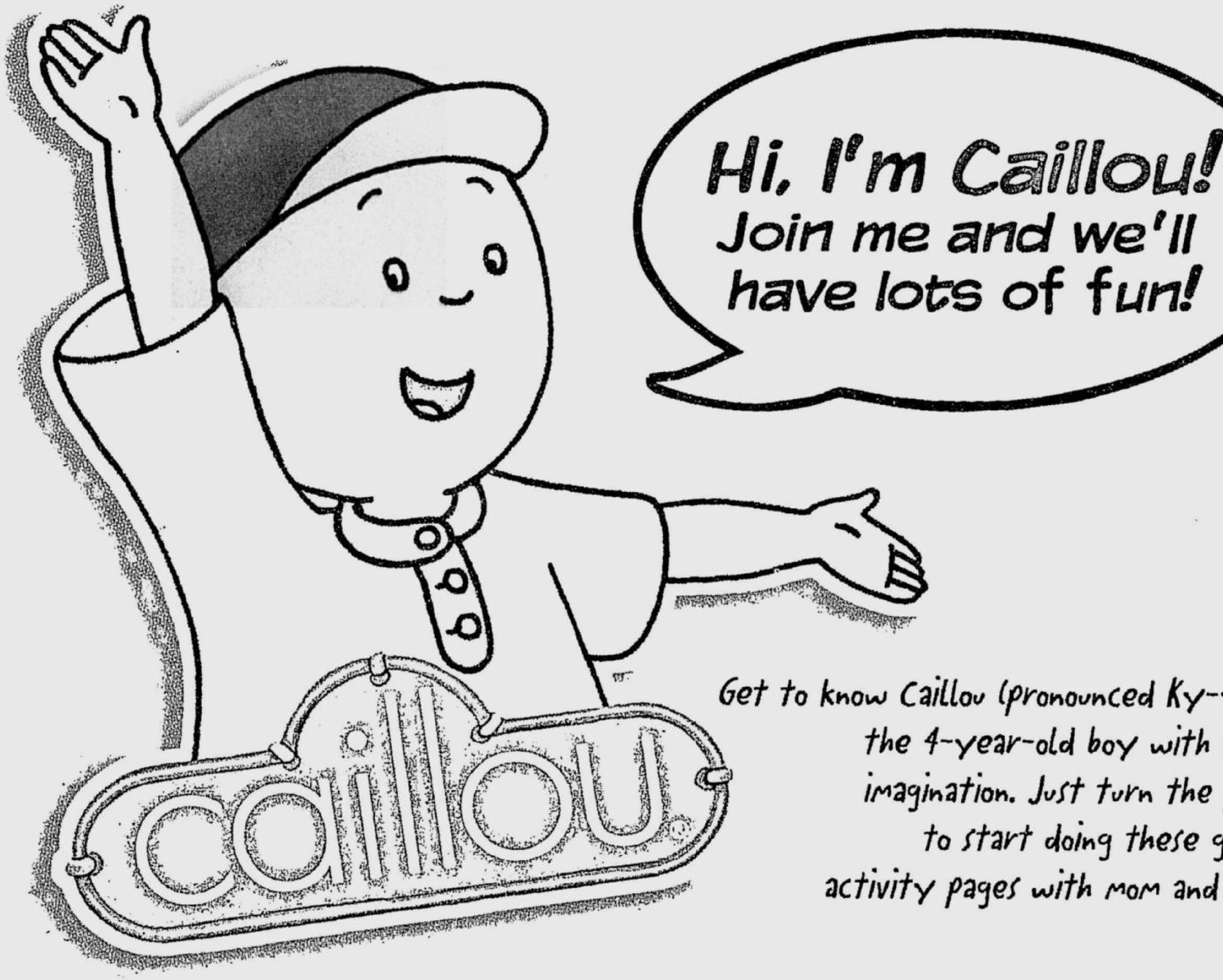
Hi, I'm Caillou!
Join me and we'll have lots of fun!
caillou

Get to know Caillou (pronounced Ky-yoo), the 4-year-old boy with a big imagination. Just turn the page to start doing these great activity pages with mom and dad.

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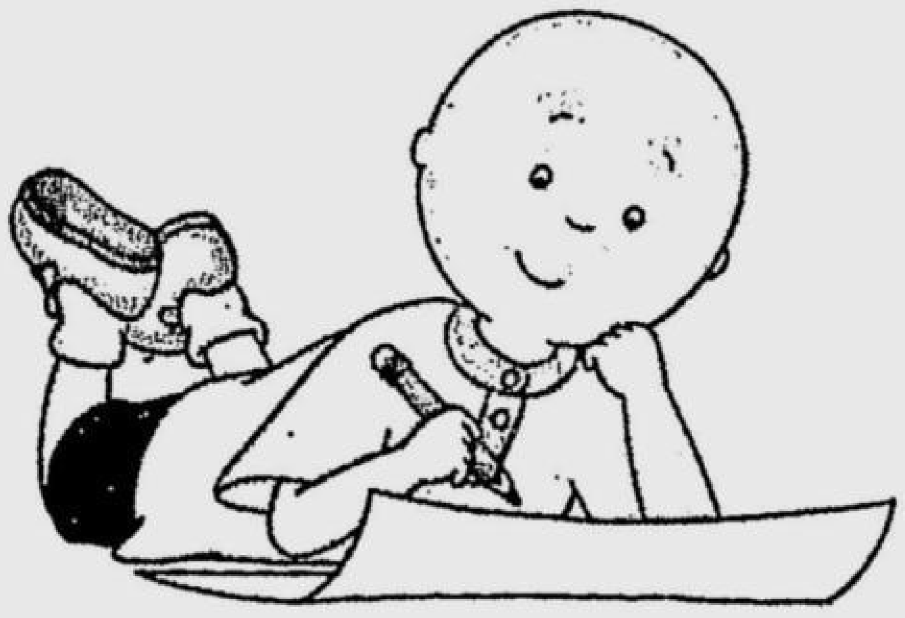
Watch out as NIDO brings Caillou to a supermarket near you!

Per DOH-BFAD Permit Nos. 0092 and 1082 Series of 2006



Color the 1's

Help Caillou find all of the 1's on the page. Color them red.

6 1 4 3 1

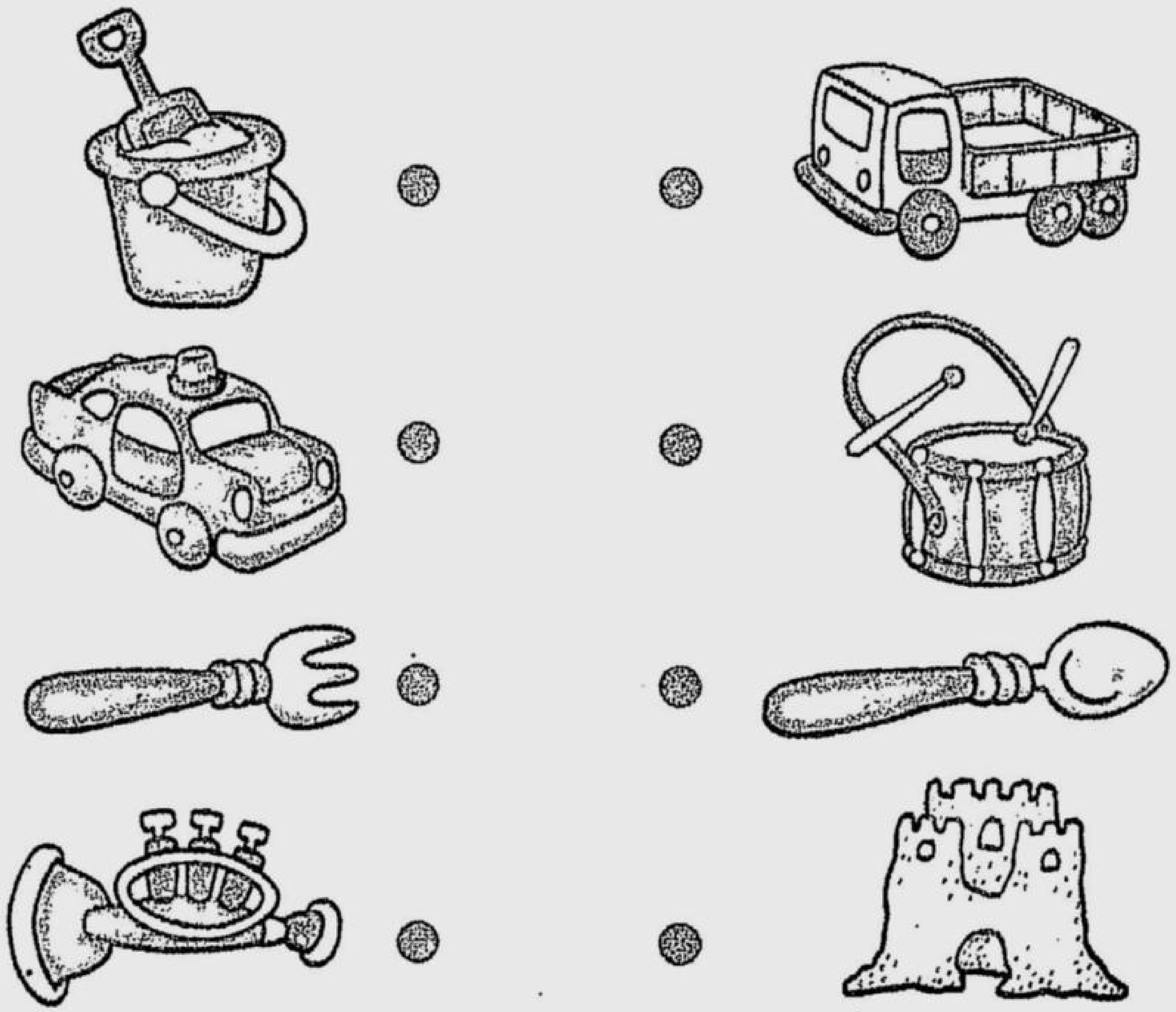
2 7 6 1 5 1 3

CHALLENGE: How many 1's can you count on this page?

Matching Similar Items

Sarah is helping Caillou with an activity page. Can you help, too?

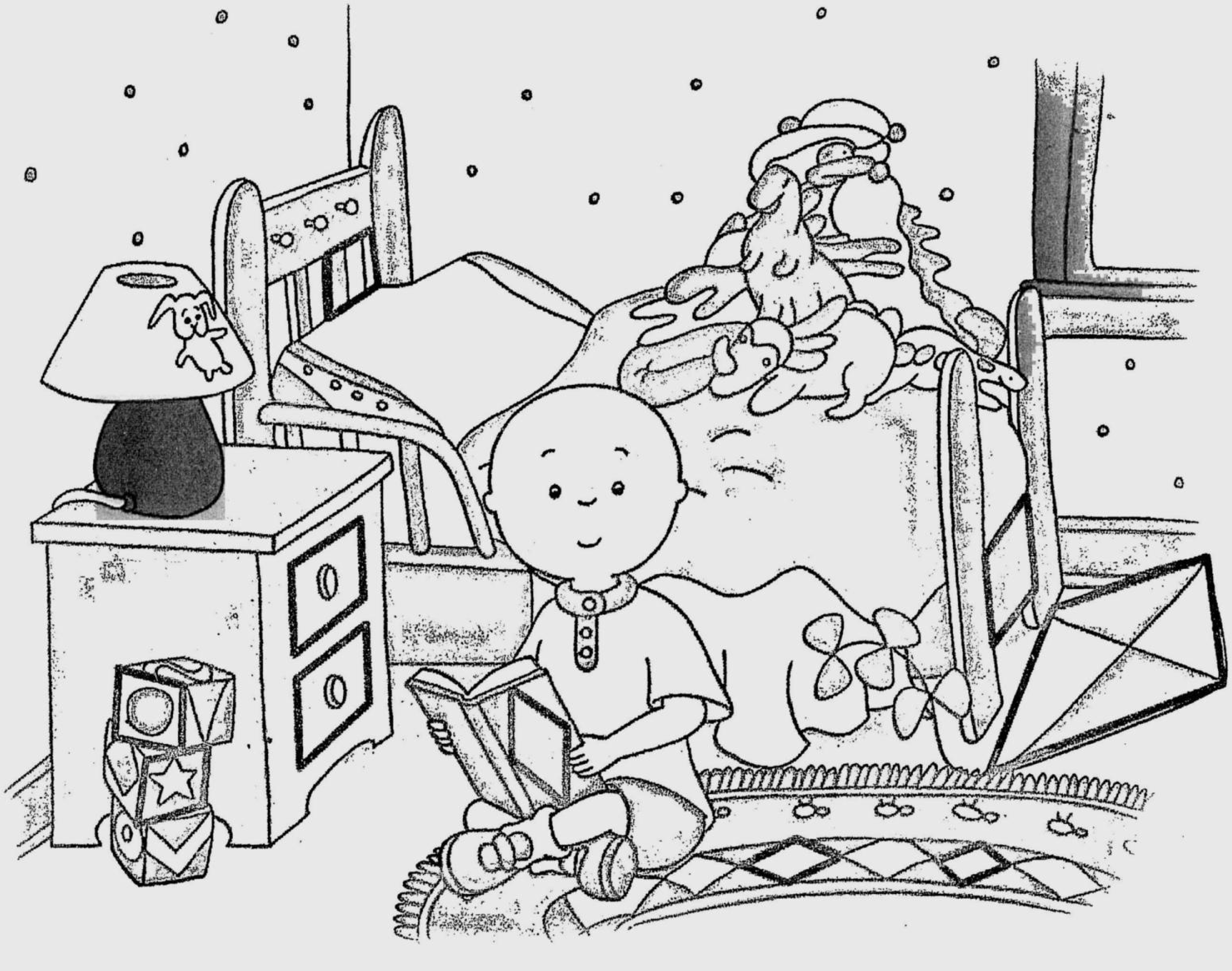
Draw a line from each item on the left to the item on the right to which it belongs.



CHALLENGE: Can you think of an object that can also belong to the horn and drum?

Find the shape

Look for the diamonds hidden in the picture and circle them (there are 10).



CHALLENGE: In the picture above, what diamond has triangles inside it?

Alphabet Order

Let's play in the leaves!

Start with the leaf with the letter A on it and draw a line that connects each leaf to the one with the next letter of the alphabet on it.

A E F M N

B G L O P Y Z

C H K R Q U X

D I J S T V W

CHALLENGE: How many letters are in the alphabet? Write your answer below.

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*sunday*INQUIRER*magazine*

December 3, 2006

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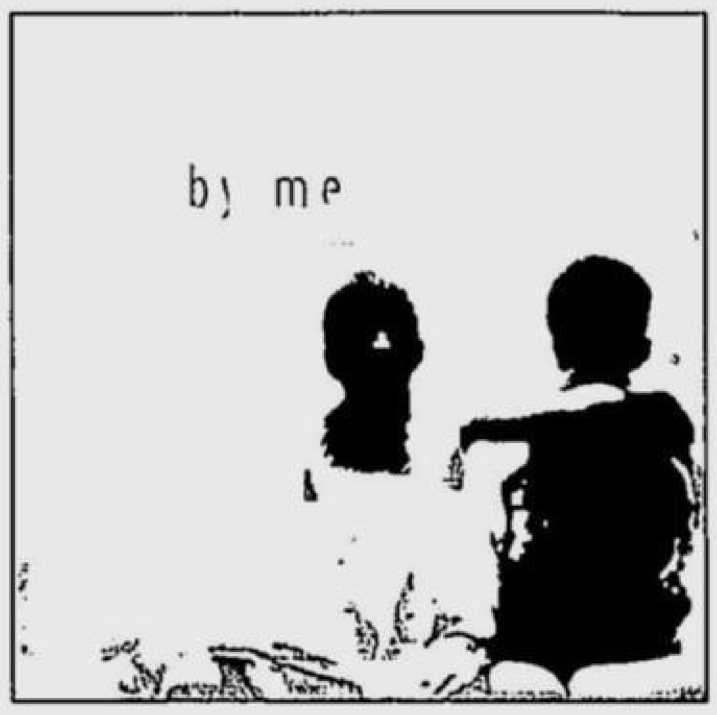
The FabuloUS GIRLS

Cheska Garcia, Angel Aquino and Iya Villania host a weekly TV show that celebrates woman power with style

PLUS: Second-generation stage stars * Living positively with AIDS * A conversation with painter Jaime de Guzman * Art-hopping in Paris * 5-step guide to meditation, and more



HEAVENLY VOICES

Sick of noisy Christmas carols? Give a listen to the inspirational music of the Jesuit Music Ministry

AMID the din of festive but undoubtedly noisy Christmas carols, why not find some truly meaningful music to commemorate the birth of Jesus by? Chances are, that CD of glorious songs by the Himig Heswita, or soothing instrumental music led by the piano of Fr. Arnel Aquino SJ, was made possible through the work of the Jesuit Music Ministry (JMM). "It's become more viable over the last 10 years," says Fr. Ari Dy, SJ, executive director of the Jesuit Communication Foundation (Jescom), of which the JMM is a component.

So viable, in fact, that the Ministry's recordings are now distributed by Universal Records. Himig Heswita's latest album, "Stand By Me," was launched last Sept. 22, and they have just returned from five concerts in New York and New Jersey on the US east coast last October. "We've become institutionalized, and we now have our own recording studio," Dy says. "People joke that the business side of things has gotten better since we Chinese Jesuits took over!"

Although music has long been a part of the Jesuit ministry, it is prolific composer and musician Fr. Eduardo P. Hontiveros who is truly considered the "Father of Jesuit Music Ministry" in contemporary times. In 1965, Fr. Honti composed a Filipino Mass while serving as Rector of San Jose Seminary. He would go on to write "classics" of Filipino liturgical music such as "*Ama Namin*," "*Ang Puso Ko'y Nagpupuri*" and "*Pananagutan*."

August de la Cruz

Jescom's man Fr. Ari Dy

The first Himig Heswita album would be released in 1981, celebrating the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Jesuits in the Philippines. Other Jesuit composers would follow in Fr. Honti's footsteps, such as Nemy Que, Fruto Ramirez, Danny Isidro and Manoling Francisco.

Dy, who is on his third year as executive director of Jescom, says his office still receives letters from people talking about the "healing component" of such music. "It's a different way of communicating without being preachy," Dy says. "These are prayers wrapped in song." **Alya B. Honasan**

Meditation made easy

Cenacle sister and certified associate Zen roshi (roughly the equivalent of a bishop in the Roman Catholic faith) Sr. Sonia Punzalan shows us how to find some quiet amid the din

1. Join a group. Even a veteran like Sr. Sonia admits to occasionally "feeling out of it" and thus appreciates the help of a support group. Meditating with companions not only motivates you to stick to the practice, she says, but everyone benefits from the combined positive energy that results from each session. Sr. Sonia holds group meditations regularly at the following days and places: Mondays, 6 p.m., 13/F ELJ Communications Center, Bldg., Eugenio Lopez Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City; Thursdays, 2/F Benpres Bldg., Meralco Avenue corner Exchange Road, Ortigas; Bahay Saturdays, 9 a.m.-12 noon, Dalangin, F. Roxas, Sta. Ana, Manila; and a whole-day sit-in every last Saurday of the month, from 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. at 94 Scout Rallos, Quezon City. There's no fee to join the sessions, but donations are always welcome.

2. Find an ideal place. While it's always good "to come to one's breath almost anywhere, even in the commotion of traffic," a quiet, conducive venue is still best for meditation, especially if you're a beginner. Pick a corner in

(continued on page 12)

Life is Tougher

for Bald Men

Baldness can make you conscious of your appearance, affecting how you project yourself to others. While not everyone can be disapproving of a hairless head, the lack of confidence and self-assurance you may project becomes evident. You feel awkward and become less assertive. And that can affect your career and social life.

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By **Margaux Salcedo**

The Birth of the Gastro Geek

Food bloggers unite—and it's a great way to share recipes, talk about common passions, and even raise money for good causes

Foodie Aun Koh, a.k.a. chubbyhubby, blogs for a cause

I USED to hate blogs. Especially the ones that do nothing but whine. Or the ones where the author crosses over from sarcastic to rude, thinking he's being witty.

Then, on a trip to Singapore, googling for the best chefs and restaurants in that country, I came across chubbyhubby.net, a site which has changed my perception of blogging forever. It is a great source of information (through the information on this site, I met one of Singapore's most well-known chefs, Justin Quek), has very perceptive articles and amazing pictures, but most importantly, it also led me to a community of writers who seek neither fame nor glory but simply want to share their love for food.

I discovered my people—the Gastro Geeks! (Sorry guys, I promise I mean it in a very positive way!) I was introduced to a world where two of my greatest passions, food and writing, converged; a world where food lovers become food writers and where food writers interact!

For the skeptic (as I was), the first thing you must know is that blogs are a great source of recipes and other cooking information. People the world over share not only their recipes but their experiences in cooking a dish, as well as tips and recommendations. And once an author posts his recipes, readers can directly comment and usually share their own roller coaster ride in making that dish. Instantly you have the perspective of three, four, maybe 12 individuals on the best way to make, say, prune walnut cake.

Secondly, since the bloggers like to share discoveries, you come across unique items, places and dishes all the time. Like the certified halal cappuccino KitKat sold in Malaysia that I discovered at candyblog (www.typetive.com/candyblog), which I chanced upon through a chubbyhubby link.

It is also a great source of honest restaurant reviews. Face it, sometimes printed reviews are not as honest as they claim to be, a result of the tragic combination of a free meal and a hungry writer. Or a result, sometimes, of editing so as not to offend others. Blogs have comment pages that expose what people really and honestly think of a new venue or menu.

The most fun, though, comes when there's a blog party! Yes, it sounds geeky, but I swear it's really cool. The Wily Filipino (thewilyfilipino.com) hosted an "adobo blog party" in 2003 where Filipino food lovers the world over shared their stories, recipes and creative literature on our favorite Pinoy soul food. Recipes for chicken and pork adobo were shared; there were musings on turkey and python adobo, and even beautiful odes to this national dish. Leny, a.k.a. Kathang-Pinay, wrote:

Duende
Said, Poetry
Is like Adobo

It
Slays Your
Palate with love.

- kathang-pinay.blogspot.com

But the greatest development in this dynamic medium is that some authors have taken it upon themselves to make blogging a vehicle for meaningful causes. Aun Koh, a.k.a. chubbyhubby, is a staunch supporter of the arts, so he gives away opera tickets to winners of trivia contests in his blog. He also introduced me to the site of Chez Pim (chezpim. typepad.com), a brilliant, witty and very observant food writer, who took the initiative of organizing Menu for Hope, where several bloggers offered Southeast Asian recipes to encourage readers to donate to Unicef for the benefit of tsunami victims in 2004, and then for the victims of the devastating earthquake in

(continued on page 12)

By **Cora Llamas**
Photographs by Ryan Lim

Princesses of the Stage

Talk about harmony: These second-generation thespians bring a new vibe to a well-loved musical

CHERUBIC faces blooming with the spring of early womanhood smiled at me in a mixture of warmth and hesitation. The welcome was real enough, the hesitation was coming from a shifting nervousness. Their famous mothers were right next door, their voices raised in song with the rest of the cast in rehearsals. As these senior and well-respected actresses had pointed out to their daughters, Repertory Philippines' "The Sound of Music" was their first professional production. No teacher to be more forgiving of their mistakes, and a crowd with high expectations. Perhaps, unlike in a school production, no visible flub or a note sung too high would be seen as "cute."

A tall order for any young teenager of either sex in their first theatrical performance, but then again Nicole Yulo, 19, Bianca Rogoff, 11, and Sophia Reyes, 10, come from excellent performance stock. Perhaps more important than that they entered the theatrical arena, fueled by their own dreams, determined to make it on their own merit, and establish their own names.

NICOLE YULO

It's a bit ironic that Nicole Yulo is playing Liezl, the star-struck daughter of Captain Von Trapp, the role that launched her mother Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo into theatrical prominence. The Brent International graduate snorts at the idea of being typecast in "tweetum" roles (which her mom also faced early in her career): In one high school production, she auditioned for the role of "Grease's" caustic in-your-face Rizzo rather than the sweet wallflower heroine Sandy. Given a choice, and assuming that Andrew Lloyd Webber would bend the rules a little, she'd rather play the title character in "The Phantom of the Opera" rather than Christine, his object of desire.

Nicole literally grew up watching her mom in rehearsals and actual performances. It was the verisimilitude that made her want to become a part of it. At the age of 3, she'd bawl every time Menchu's Fantine had her big weepy death scene in 1993's "Les Miserables." "It just amazed me how people who are ordinary could transform themselves and make the audience feel what they want them to feel," she remembers.

Yet her decision to enter theater arts was not exactly greeted with open arms by her parents. They wanted her to finish her studies, get a job, and do theater on the side. "They don't want me to starve, which is understandable."

In the blood: Bianca, Nicole and Sophia are set to follow in their moms' footsteps

Menchu confirms the suggestion that was made with concern. "Her father and I told her that whatever she decides to do in life, do her best. I've been in theater since I was 15. It's a struggle in the Philippines, because theater cannot pay you what a job will. But if it falls into your lap and there's no way out of it, do the best that you can."

Whatever her choice, Menchu gushes with obvious pride, mentioning how her analytical daughter "graduated with National Honors and has been accepted in one of the best schools in the US" and can take on "deeper, stronger roles." That's why theater's premiere thespian takes a hands-off approach when it comes to her daughter's performance, beginning in "The Sound of Music," where Menchu plays heroine Maria, who is also the stepmother of Nicole's character. "I never make *pakialam* and teach her only when she comes to me. I want her achievement to be hers."

The feisty Nicole takes a healthy approach to working with her mother. "We're doing the mushy scenes when she tells me to wait for years before I fall in love. I have to concentrate on not laughing my head off. It's so weird, we have to play really really sweet—and it's not us, because we're much more direct and we don't burst into song!"

BIANCA ROGOFF

Cherie Gil, one of the country's top character actresses, was surprised when her little girl Bianca Rogoff let her and her husband know that she wanted to follow in the Eigenmann family business

(continued on page 6)

and act. "She's very shy," explains Cherie, "*Hindi siya kaagad sumasabak* (She doesn't jump right in). We're very attached, and she is close to me."

But what Cherie recognized early on was that Bianca had a focused mind and a diligent spirit under that demure exterior. The girl did not speak a word of Italian when she started schooling in that country, where her family stayed for a few years. In a month's time, she was fluent in the language while her mother was still grappling with it.

> **Repertory is a first step on that long journey, and Cherie couldn't be happier. "Acting is a craft that [illegible] love. Bianca disciplines and hones herself. It's important for her to [illegible] through it'**

Bianca has been appearing in school productions like "Oliver!" and "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" in the British School where she studies. Perhaps it was watching her mom act in stage plays, TV series, and movies. When her parents dutifully informed her that there were try-outs for "The Sound of Music," Bianca jumped at the chance.

Cherie did warn Bianca: "Are you sure you want to do the try-outs because they're tough? And if you get in, promise me you will do well in school." Bianca's response was to follow her mom's sound advice: "She's always told me to be confident and follow my dreams."

In a few years' time, that dream just might lead to the prestigious Juilliard School of Drama; her dad, internationally renowned violinist Roni Rogoff, had graduated from its School of Music. Bianca envisions performing in Broadway when she's a bit older.

Right now, Repertory is a first step on that long journey, and Cherie couldn't be happier. "Acting is a craft that I love. Bianca disciplines and hones herself. It's important for her to go through it knowing that she did it on her own merits. Rep is a good beginning because *Tita* Baby (Barredo, the show's director) will not fool around with this; it doesn't matter who you are."

The first hurdle that Bianca faces is appearing onstage with her mom, who plays the aristocratic Baroness who could very well send off Bianca's character, Louisa, along with the rest of her siblings to a boarding school.

"My character is not supposed to like the Baroness," Bianca divulges, almost sheepishly, "and that's quite hard."

SOPHIA REYES

"My mom used to bring me to her tapings. I'd cry when I'd see her die and when she became alive, I thought it was a miracle," says Sophia, daughter of Rina Reyes, grand-daughter of Baby O'Brien, and great-grand-daughter of Paraluman.

And when that realization hit home, the little girl literally walked up to one TV producer and said, "I want to be a star."

Like mothers, like daughters: With moms Cherie Gil, Menchu Lauchengco Yulo and Rina Reyes

Rina, who's making a comeback and is playing the Baronness in "The Sound of Music," took her aside and said, "Darling, can we learn how to sing and act first?"

To prove that she could walk her talk, Sophia started taking up singing and flamenco lessons and went through theater workshops. And Sophia was happily relieved when her mother transferred her from a school that did not encourage their very young students to appear in plays to one that did.

Understandably, Rina felt a little worried at her daughter's early interest. "Showbiz is not an easy life. First they make you an ingénue who's intelligent, then later on you have to become a sex bomb, then you are a has-been because there' s not a role for you. You have to have morals. If you are *sikat* and make so much money, it can get into your head."

The actress-entrepreneur acknowledges, "I've tried a life with showbiz and a life without it. The quiet life is so much happier."

But Sophia also remembered the best lesson she feels her mother taught her: "Be yourself. Don't act like somebody else."

And what Sophia wants to be is an actress. She is well aware of the world she is entering, "My mom and grandmom said I should do this if I want to but not to fail while in school. They are so serious about this, they are talking about the shows and how many people will be watching."

Mom Rina had, after all, heard the same spin when she entered showbiz at the earlier age of 9.

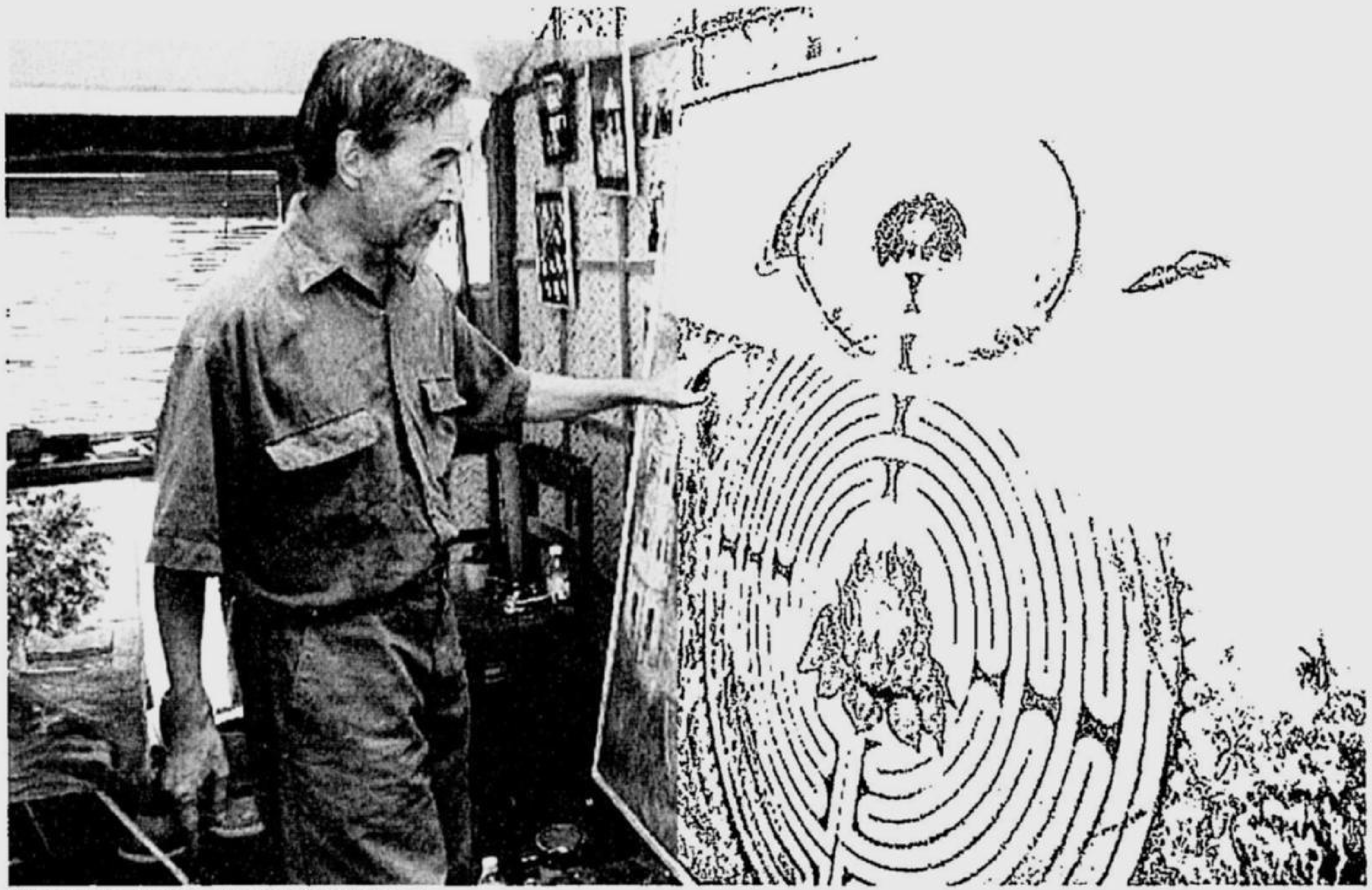
And what's it like making her first professional stage appearance opposite her mom? "It's fun but annoying sometimes," Sophia shrugs. When they leave for rehearsals, mom Rina "keeps on making me *kulit* that she or I will be late, and she starts getting mad in the car."

Rina admits that she can be protective at times of her little girl. She sighs, "If I can protect her from the *lamok*, I will. Part of my process of being a good mom is learning when to hold back, and I don't know how yet." •

"The Sound of Music" runs at Onstage Greenbelt 1 until December 17. Call tel. nos. 887-0710 and 891-9999.

By **Filipina Lippi**

Tamed Demons and Magical Paintings



The artist with "Beatific Vision"

After years as a protest painter and a pottery maker, renowned expressionist Jaime de Guzman now aims to capture the metaphysical on canvas

FILIPINO expressionist painter Jaime de Guzman, 62, produced stunning allegorical and historical works from the late '60s to the early '70s. His large canvases captured the Philippine soul, its angst, questions and joys, the proportions of which match the arduous issues of passionate warriors marching out of a colonized past. He was enamored with stoneware pottery after his marriage to Anne, an American, in the '70s. They propagated pottery-making as a way of life in Liliw, Quezon where they lived, and also in Sagada in northern Luzon in the late '80s. After seven children, they separated in the early '90s. She now heads the art department of Summit High School in Seattle. A resident of Candelaria, Quezon, de Guzman has gone back to landscape paintings and other "metaphysical" pieces that draw out journeys from hell to altars. Here's an excerpt of an interview with him.

SIM: What kind of paintings do you do now?
JAIME DE GUZMAN: My recent ones are landscape paintings. I have also done poetic paintings.

SIM: What drew you to landscape painting?
JG: I have been stimulated by my travels in Southeast Asia-Indonesia, Cambodia, etc.

SIM: Please tell me more about your metaphysical or poetic paintings.
JG: One is titled "Axis-Mundi." Before I went to Indonesia early this year, I painted a tree in the middle of my canvas. I interconnected its roots to the earth, near a body of water. On the left side of the canvas is a Buddha in Borobudur in Jogjakarta. That was after I received a postcard of Borobudur from my son Orlando. He and his wife Anna are now residing in Indonesia. I was with my grandson Carlo (Orlando and Anna's child) in central Java when Merapi erupted last May. When I came back to Manila, I painted Merapi's eruption on the right side of my canvas.

"Axis Mundi" is about tension, of heaven and earth, of earth and water. But it is also about interconnection, the way a tree takes root. I have drawn a bow, its arrow reaching up to the top of the tree to show cosmic interconnection. A spark marks the meeting of the bow and the arrow. That spark orchestrates the volcano's eruption and a hint of turmoil behind the Buddha.

SIM: So what are you trying to say?
JG: I am showing on canvas that the tension point, the dividing line between war and peace, for example, is an immoveable spot. I am recreating on canvas the sound of the universe on that immoveable spot.

SIM: How will you compare your new pieces with your old works from the '70s?
JG: In 1971, I made a painting titled "*Flores Para Dante*," a year after I studied under David Siqueiros, a revolutionary muralist in Mexico. My canvas was in red, blue and white, like the Philippine flag. A Christ-like figure was on the blue side, a labyrinth on the red side, and Christ with a cross on the white triangle in the central upper part. A snake-carrying eagle was hovering on the top.

SIM: How will you describe your transition after doing allegories of hell on canvas during the martial law years, and after devoting 30 years to pottery making?
JG: In the past, my colors were dark, foreboding and angry. Now, I am more concerned with radiance. I think I have gone full circle. I am now into personal mythologies. It is like being Ulysses, the exiled hero of the Greek epic, in Homer's "Odyssey," who came back to draw the bow. You find the center when you draw the bow.

SIM: Are you still arduously in search of the Filipino

(continued on page 14)

Leica R. Carpc

The FabuloUS GIRLS

Ch lyc 'il
Gi e style

No divas: Cheska, Angel and Iya

ASIDE from killer cheekbones and waistlines that average at 24 inches, what could a former supermodel, an aspiring actress and a potential recording star have in common, other than the ability to steal each other's boyfriends and vie for the same big-time shampoo commercials? Putting them together to host a magazine show where they are given free rein on subject matter, hairstyle and script changes allows much room for "diva" attitudes and sparks, but fortunately, it doesn't turn out that way. Behind the scenes with Studio 23's "Us Girls," will it be "Charlie's Angels" or "Desperate Housewives"? Initial impression: All seems quiet on the front when I get to the location shoot to meet the sexy trio.

CHESKA—THE *MALDITA*

Cheska Garcia or Checca is the first one I meet. Smaller and prettier then her pictures, she was dressed daintily in a lace and silky knee-length dress in café au lait brown with velvet ankle-wrap stilettos. She epitomizes grace and poise—until she starts to speak. Her husky voice and sharp remarks mask a *maldita* (her words) underneath. "When I first met her, I said, oh no, she's the diva type, and she struck me as *mataray*," says a co-host. "But when I got to know her better, I found her to be an honest, hardworking and true friend." Okay, a showbiz response, but contrary to how it sounds, Cheska does come across as straightforward and real. Despite her fragile appearance, this former gymnast can still handle the uneven bars, and is not afraid to share her innermost thoughts—via poetry reading in public. No prima donna, she personally handles her car's monthly maintenance checks. *(Possibly giving the mechanics at her* casa *a bit of a thrill as she gives instructions on engine problems, wheel alignment, etc.)*

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Style: "I like to be experimental, and wear whatever I like. I don't need a special occasion to dress up."

Vice: White wine *(so it's not a vice!)*

Comfort food: Dark chocolate *(she eats!)*

Weirdest thing about you: "When I'm awakened suddenly, I shoot with my fingers the people who wake me up." *(War freak??!!)*

On posing nude: "Never say never."

Would you rather be fat or ugly? "Why ask me that? It doesn't matter, because at end of the day, it's who you are that matters."

Worst thing that could happen to you: "Lose my zest for life."

Sweetest spontaneous line of interview: "Nothing can go wrong with when I'm with Doug." *(Kramer, her hunky basketball star boyfriend—aww, shucks.)*

Dream gigs: "Commercials for Oil of Olay, Pond's and Splash."

Fave wish: "To be a Victoria's Secret model and to be taller." *(Hey, that's my wish.)*

What makes her nervous: "Speaking in front of a large crowd."

How to be a good public speaker: "Drink white wine—just one glass."

Secret me: "I'm very O.C. I don't like shoes worn in my room. No dirty clothes on my bed." *(Hello, isn't that just normal?)*

Fantasy career: "Become a country singer." *(Now, that could be a vice.)*

Most significant memory: "Still waiting for that one—maybe 'I do.'" *(Doug alert!)*

Three words: "I am moody, affectionate and witty."

Last word: "I don't need to hear that you love me every day; I prefer you say it rarely and mean it." *(a.k.a. "Keep it real or I will break you.")*

IYA—THE ENERGIZER BUNNY

"I go with opportunities that present themselves," Iya Villania says. She came to the Philippines to record her album, and ended up getting sidetracked into showbiz. Her rap sheet (endorsements, awards, guestings), despite her young age of 18, reads a mile long, probably because she started at 13. The self-described "wacko" of the trio, she will do anything for a laugh. She can't help it—she is just so full of energy, it literally jumps out from her. She thinks this boundless energy is hereditary, and runs in the females of her family. Dressed in squashed-down boots, funky shorts and a T-shirt, with an endearing Sydney accent to boot, she's too cute for words. Her co-hosts' first impression of her was that she is "so energetic" they were wondering how they would keep up with her.

Style: Spunky and funky—one of a kind "You know US girls, we don't like to look like everybody else." (Ukay-ukay *girl at heart—very cool.)*

Vice: "I'm very selfish with my dessert." *(Again, not a vice!)*

Comfort food: From fries to pizza, she eats everything and anything.

Weirdest thing about you: "I am weird in general and unpredictable, and always laugh at my own jokes, as if I was the funniest girl in the world."

On posing nude: "NO in capital letters—what for? I would do it if the whole world were naked." *(This could be very ugly.)*

Would you rather be fat or ugly:? "I think being uncomfortable with yourself in your own skin is the worst thing. You could be fat and happy. It's all about accepting yourself."

Secret name: "Bubba—because I'm the baby."

Dream gig: "Have a concert or star in a movie with Keanu Reeves—wait, is he really gay?" *(If anyone knows for sure, please let us know.)*

Three words to describe yourself : "Wacky, energized and happy."

From a staff member: Iya always gets mobbed in the mall!

Secret vice: "I'm a backseat driver." *(Learn to drive and get someone to backseat drive you—it's a sure-fire cure.)*

Porn star name: Minky *(her pet cat)* Mifsub *(street where she lived). (Hmmm, stick with Iya.)*

Childhood memory: "They use to call me George when I was a kid, because I looked like a boy." *(Well, you've come a long way since then, girlfriend.)*

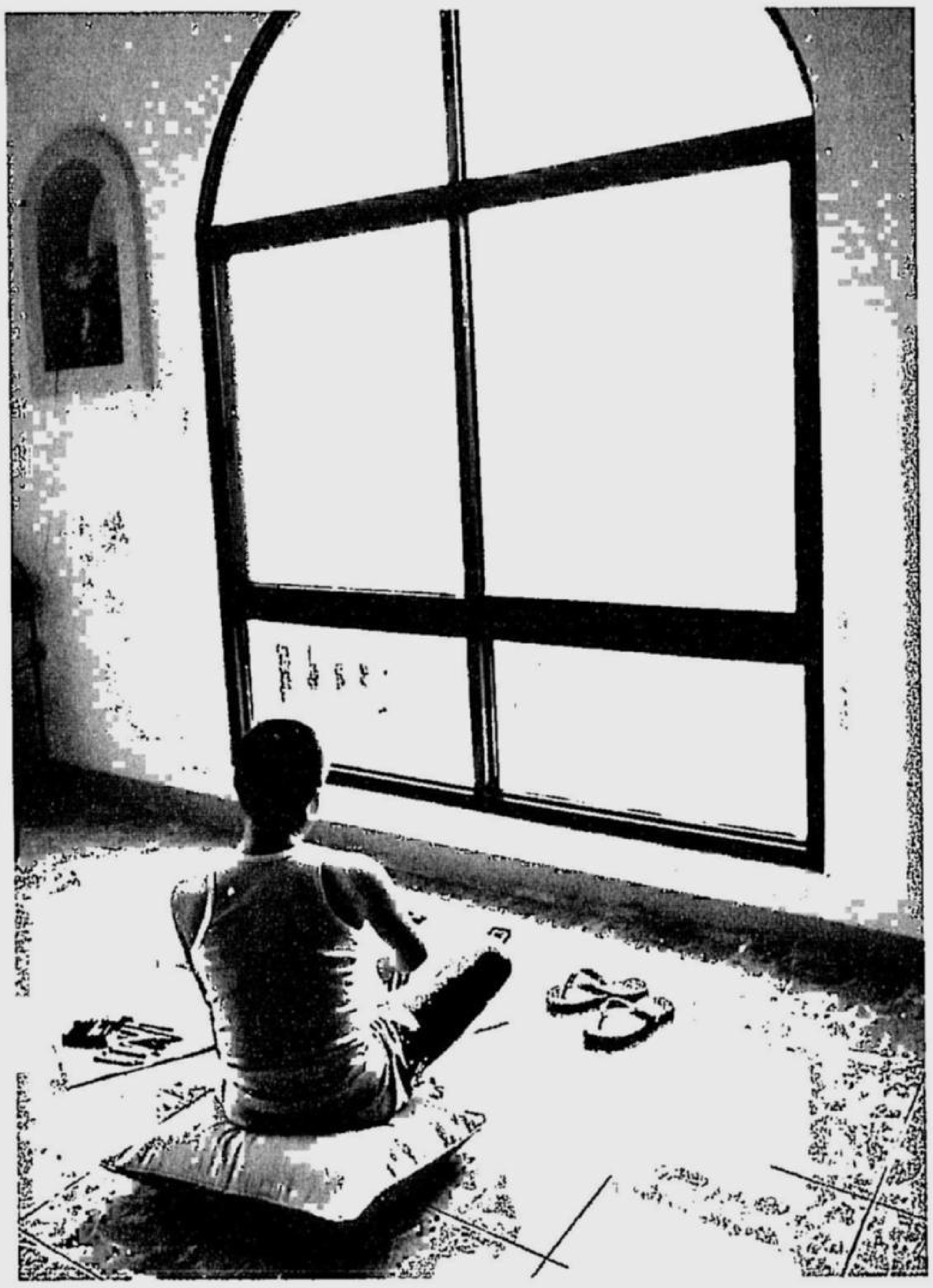
ANGEL—THE COOL ONE

I end the interview with the *ate* of the group, Angel Aquino. Rosanna Roces once called her "Ugly." Arriving late, dressed simply in jeans, a white cotton sleeveless top cinched with a wide red belt and carrying a shoulder-slung Louis Vuitton bag paired with red stilettos, she had a mobile phone attached to her ear and looked camera ready even before she sat in the make-up chair. From her shiny hair to

(continued on page 15)

By **Pennie Azarcon-dela Cruz**

Think Positive, Fight AIDS



FOR 10 years, Noel Pascual worked as a supervisor in a supermarket in Saudi Arabia. Like most overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), he kept himself busy earning enough to send home and rarely bothered about health matters, least of all HIV infection.

"Although I had undergone pre-departure orientation seminars, HIV was not among the subjects discussed," he said of the compulsory government-sponsored sessions held for all outbound Filipino workers.

Pascual was diagnosed as positive for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, in 1999. Now a peer educator on the disease, he suggests that getting infected migrant workers involved in HIV-AIDS prevention is the surest way to trim the number of OFWs infected with the virus.

Although the Philippines has a less than one percent HIV prevalence rate with over 2,500 reported cases and an estimated 11,000 unreported cases as of June 2006, 30 to 35 percent of the cases can be traced to OFWs and their partners, the Health Department has reported.

Pascual, an official of CARAM Asia, a non-government group on migrants' issues, and Pinoy Plus, an organization of Filpinos found positive for HIV, believes that doing meaningful work, "thinking positive" and getting involved in HIV prevention is one therapy worth trying in the battle against AIDS.

Being part of the work in HIV prevention rebuilds their self-esteem, Pascual reveals. "Knowing that we are taking part in this important task makes us feel that our lives are still meaningful," he adds.

As a peer educator, Pascual and his group provide counselling to newly diagnosed migrants who are also informed of the services and support provided by similar organizations. Some of them are trained to become resource speakers so that they can conduct pre-departure orientation for departing OFWs and train foreign service personnel deployed in Philippine embassies abroad.

Pascual notes, however, that getting OFWs involved in HIV prevention presents several challenges, foremost being the lack of a sense of urgency among migrant workers. "They don't see the urgency of HIV-AIDS until they get infected," he says, speaking from personal experience.

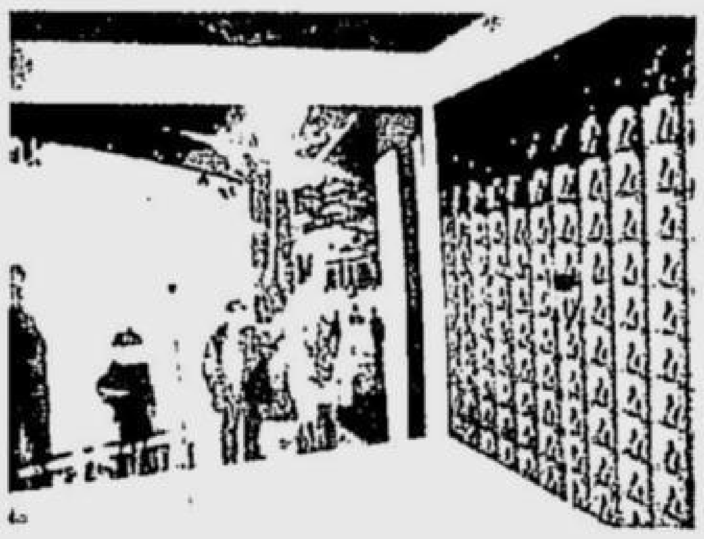
Then there is the matter of dealing with the physical impact of HIV infection. "HIV-AIDS advocacy work is stressful, psychologically and physically, and it can aggravate our health," he points out. The need to continuously earn a living also prevents more infected OFWs from participating in community work. "Those of us who still have jobs would rather spend our time in income-earning activities rather than voluntary advocacy work," says Pascual.

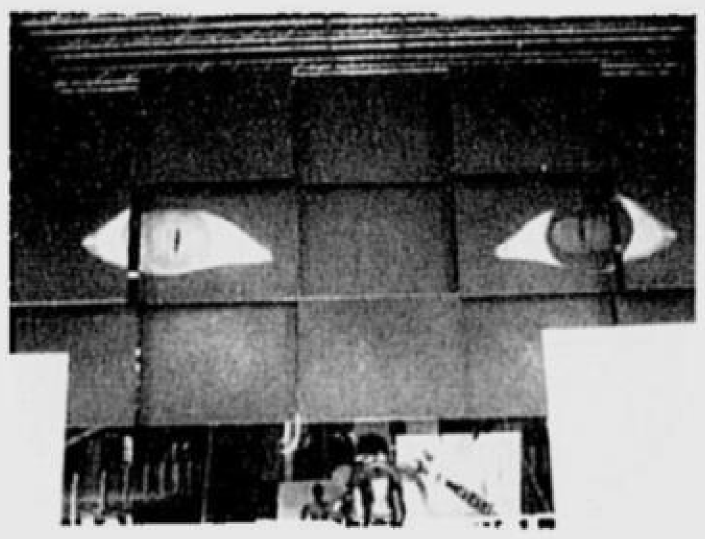
The biggest deterrent, however, is the continuing stigma attached to persons living with HIV-AIDS, he notes. "The fear of being disclosed to our families and communities prevents some of us from getting involved in advocacy work, especially those that require us to speak in public fora. In some cases, family members discourage us from coming out, saying that the stigma affects them as well."

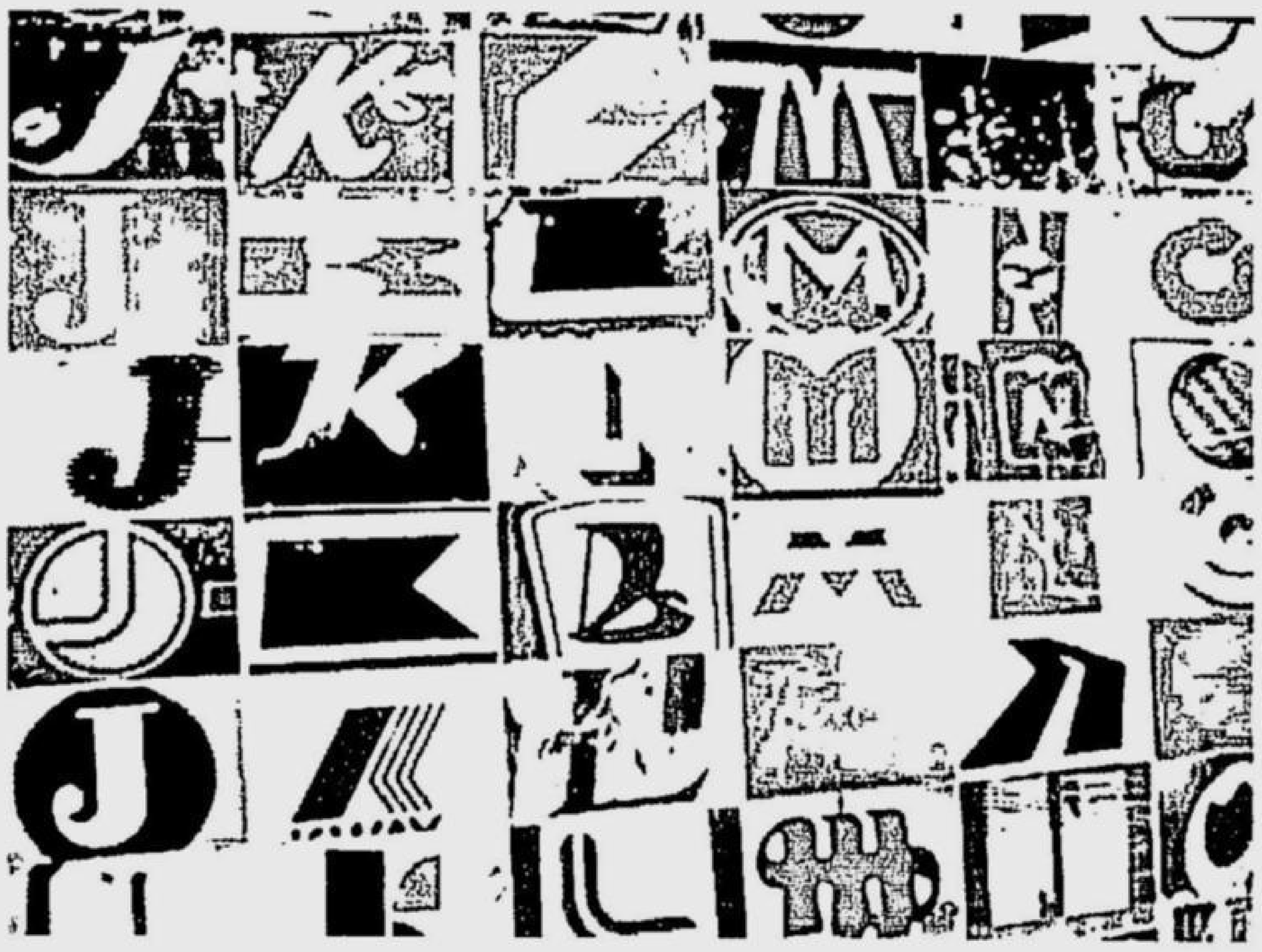
But Pascual, like many of his colleagues, chooses to remain hopeful and optimistic. Their first-hand experiences, he says, can give more impact to AIDS advocacy and make them more credible as peer counsellors and educators. "Primarily, we give a face to the HIV epidemic. We serve as living testimonies that there is still productive life after HIV infection." •

By **Angelique L. Villaraza**

Art-Hopping in Paris







AMONG the many special exhibitions currently running in Paris, an amazingly fresh and exhilarating few stand out at the Centre Pompidou. Locally known as the Centre National d'art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, this venue focuses on modern and contemporary creation, where the visual arts mix with theatre, music, cinema, literature and the spoken word.

You may hate or love this building, designed by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, but you definitely won't miss it upon alighting from the rue Rambuteau Metro. It registers as surprising, garish, a stark contrast to the grey Parisian skies and even greyer buildings. Some 6 million people pass through the Centre Pompidou's doors each year, a total of over 150 million visitors in its 25 years or so of existence.

Besides housing the leading collection of modern and contemporary art in Europe, there is a vast library with facilities for over 2,000 readers, documentation on 20th century art, a cinema and performance halls, a music research institute, educational activity areas, bookshops, a restaurant and a café. Each year the Centre Pompidou holds 30 or so public exhibitions plus international events.

There is so much going on, in fact, enough to lead to a visual and sensory overload. It took me five days to digest four exhibits, and I had to rest my eyes and my brain in between galleries.

If you have less than five days in Paris, here are the top picks:

Try not to miss "*Fabrica: Les Yeux Ouverts*," which runs only until November 13, 2006. Fabrica is a concept by Luciano Benetton and Oliviero Toscani for this one-of-a-kind communication lab experiment. It delves into graphic design, cinema, industrial design, music, publishing, new media and photography. The exhibition entrance begins with a descent of steps which emit music upon touch, cinema special effects, photography experiments with the visitors as live guinea pigs, magazine dummies for all over the world, hanging from the ceiling and open for anyone to read. In total, it redefines the boundaries between art and communication.

I couldn't help but purchase a Fabrica CD named "Counterpoint," which had music by the interestingly named Imelda Marcos Boys Choir, an Italian group that mixes sounds from turntables and percussion.

This November is Photography Month in France, and almost every museum or gallery has its own photography special. The Centre Pompidou offers "*Pientres de la Vie Moderne*" until March 12, 2007 with new works by Thomas Struth, Andreas Gursky, Thomas Ruff, Martin Parr, Thomas Demand, Valérie Jouve, Eric Poitevin and Sophie Ristelhueber. The Centre's photograph bank nearly 700 new works by more than 200 French and foreign artists. They are of remarkable quality and breadth, are on show in a large space divided into three themes: the representation of power, social/political dimensions, fiction/illusion.

The Centre's favorite is "Yves Klein: Body, Colour, Immaterial...," running until February 5, 2007. Yves Klein is famous for a very strong vivid blue (International Klein Blue) and monochrome work. But the rest of his creations are unknown to the general public. In this exhibit you will witness his conceptual art, architectural projects, sound works, ballet choreography, film sets, major written works. The exhibition is guided by the words of Yves Klein himself, and organized into three chapters: impregnation, illumination of matter and incarnation. These are key elements of his work which he associates with three colors: blue, gold and pink.

There's a current craze of over the Robert Rauschenberg "*Combines*," which now has late-night openings on Thursdays (until 11 pm), and it runs until January 15, 2007. Before Paris, this exhibit moved on from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles.

Rauschenberg launched his artistic career with series of monochrome paintings in black, white, gold and red, featuring varied textural effects produced by the

(continued on page 12)

SUDOKU

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

7				6		8		
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Difficulty Level ★★★★★

2006 Conceptis Puzzles. Dist by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

12-03

Answer to previous puzzle

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1	3	8	7	6	4	2	5	9
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Difficulty Level ★★★★

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Meditation made easy (from page 2)

your room, or better yet, turn a spare bedroom into a private meditation area.

3. Assume the position. Whether you're seated comfortably on a chair or on a floor, your legs crossed in a half-lotus, always remember to keep your spine straight and aligned with your head. Sr. Sonia also recommends meditating with "half-open eyes," as an open-eye meditation can make you vulnerable to distractions, while closed eyes could tempt you to fall asleep.

4. Should you meditate to music? "If it helps, then okay," says Sr. Sonia. Chanting, even words you don't understand, is an effective alternative: Sr. Sonia, who led a poor community in Cebu through meditation, notes how the group "calmed down" after chanting Sanskrit and Japanese affirmations "that had no intellectual meaning for them. But the rhythmic sounds resembled the rustling of pine trees in the wind," she says, "and that proved very soothing."

5. Allow your thoughts to flow. Contrary to popular belief, meditation does not require you to erase all thoughts. "It is not a chore that we focus on nothingness," says Sr. Sonia. "That is an impossible task." Instead, think of your random thoughts "as clouds in the sky, or jeeps passing by," says Sr. Sonia gently. "Don't ride your thoughts. Just note each one, exhale, then let it go." Joy Rojas

The Birth of the Gastro Geek (from page 4)

the Kashmir region of India and Pakistan in 2005. A raffle of donations from fellow bloggers and some sponsors also helped raise thousands of dollars for these causes. Pim wrote, "It is an absolute joy for us food bloggers to be able to share what we are passionate about every single day on our blogs. And it is even a bigger delight to share them with those who need help the most."

You can start your own blog, too. My favorite blogs contain man-on-the-street stories from the guy next door. Kwentongtambay shares how Caucasians ask why there's a number 5 to Soup No. 5; and Lori of dessertcomesfirst shares in journal-like prose every delightful food find from Binondo to Paris. Plus, this hobby can even become lucrative. Chubbyhubby, who started foodblogging only a couple of years ago, now averages 80,000 hits a month, that sponsors are lining up to get space on his site.

But it's never a money-making venture for food bloggers. The best thing about this community is that it is really driven simply by a love for food, the bloggers brought together by an appreciation of good cooking and fine cuisine. I must say, contrary to my earlier perception of blogs, gastro geeks create very tasteful sites! •

Art-Hopping in Paris (from page 11)

marouflage and painting of newspaper. He created surfaces, in particular his white paintings, which offer themselves as mirrors, neutral surfaces waiting to accept the reflections of the world. "Rauschenberg: *Combines*" is the first exhibition dedicated exclusively to this essential creative phase of the artist, which marked the beginning of his international artistic influence. •

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But it's never a money-making venture for food bloggers. The best thing about this community is that it is really driven simply by a love for food, the bloggers brought together by an appreciation of good cooking and fine cuisine. I must say, contrary to my earlier perception of blogs, gastro geeks create very tasteful sites! •

Art-Hopping in Paris page

marouflage and painting of newspaper. He created surfaces, in particular his white paintings, which offer themselves as mirrors, neutral surfaces waiting to accept the reflections of the world. "Rauschenberg: *Combines*" is the first exhibition dedicated exclusively to this essential creative phase of the artist, which marked the beginning of his international artistic influence. •

Remembering A Renaissance Man

Nick Joaquin's last work, the biography of artist and writer E. Aguilar Cruz, is set to be launched

NICK Joaquin's frank biographical sketch of the late E. Aguilar Cruz will be launched on December 5 at Abe, the restaurant in Serendra named after the late writer, artist, and bon vivant.

Titled "ABE: A Frank Sketch of E. Aguilar Cruz," the book's much-awaited launch is timed with the 15th death anniversary of the late Abe Cruz, who, in his time, was a living legend, a well-loved intellectual, erudite editor and essayist and humanist. Appointed ambassador to Unesco in the mid-'70s, Abe Cruz is also remembered as a raconteur, a gourmand, and a mentor to many bright and talented young people who gravitated around him.

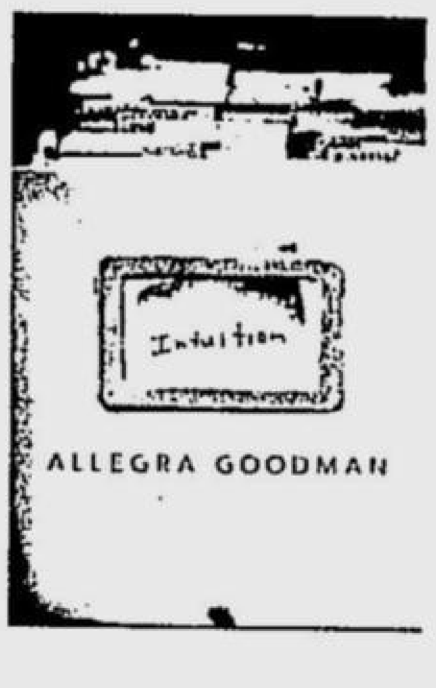
Published by the Juan D. Nepomoceno Center for Kapampangan Studies of the Holy Angel University in Angeles City, "ABE" will come out in both hard and soft cover editions and will be available in leading bookstores and other outlets.

Two years in the making, "ABE" was, according to Abe Cruz's son, restaurateur Larry J. Cruz, in his Introduction, "a book waiting to be written by Nick." The author was a close friend and journalistic and literary colleague of both Abe Cruz and his wife Fely. Johnny Gatbonton, a close friend of Abe's, in a review, writes: "Nowadays life all too often grinds the uniqueness out of people and shapes them to fit technological specifications, so that each new individual is a repetition of another. Personalities like Emilio Aguilar Cruz have become few and far between. Nick Joaquin's frank—and loving—sketch of his friend and contemporary is a nostalgic and bittersweet account of one such man and of the spacious times that made him possible."

The late "Abe" Cruz, photographed by Wig Tysman

"ABE" was a two-year project by the National Artist for Literature. The last chapter of the book was signed and submitted to the heirs of Abe Cruz two months before the National Artist died. •

The public is invited to the book launch on December 6 from 4 to 8 in the evening at Abe Restaurant, located at Serendra, Fort Bonifacio, in Taguig. For inquiries, call tel. no. 522-9163.



Good doctor, bad doctor

A GOOD novelist can source the deepest, most affecting observations on human nature from the strangest places. Allegra Goodman's "Intuition" (The Dial Press, available at National Book Store: P1,049) is one of the best books you will ever read about something you were not interested in.

Set in the 1980s at a Cambridge, Massachusetts research center called the Philpott Institute, "Intuition" tells of a group of scientists and their quest to cure cancer—or rather, their need to say that they are going to cure cancer. "Intuition" is not about the brilliance of science nor the evolution of medicine. It is, instead, about the deceptions and the discoveries of man versus man.

When a troubled researcher named Cliff Bannaker seemingly makes a breakthrough, the lab puts all their resources and efforts behind it. But Cliff's disaffected ex-lover Robin Deeker thinks that Cliff may have cheated—or is she just jealous?

Those thoughts begin a remarkable avalanche of doubt and diligence, as people's intentions and motives come into scrutiny. As Cliff's research is dissected, it becomes clear that the scientists themselves—and their loved ones—are the ones under surveillance. And what a dark, conflicted corner they've backed themselves into. Doubt, like devotion, touches everyone. Nobody emerges unscathed. Nobody is truly all right. This is a beautifully paced, intricate web of character studies that seems so real it feels like nonfiction. Maybe it's because readers will find many of the same doubts inside them, and wonder if they are "too good to be true," or "too true to be good." **Ruel S. De Vera**

P88 the magic number

THE double infinity symbol must have something to it. Most shops these days have a bargain corner where everything sells for P88—Watson's has one, DIY at Gateway Cubao, too, while Robinson's Department Stores have Japan Home. From rolls of toilet paper to earthenware bowls, DVD holders, plastic food keepers, flashlights, bamboo blinds, rubber mats, shower curtains, modular wall shelves, mugs and kitchenware, photo albums and even packs of sesame fish chips, Japan Home items are uniformly pegged at that magic number. Real cheap, ayt? Well, most of the goods are made in China and some goods can be downright shoddy. It's a hit and miss affair, really, with the wasabi peas and portable clothesline turning out to be duds in this shopper's case. Ask to examine the goods and be sure to get the measurements right before settling for that home improvement item. You want good buys, not goodbye to your hard-earned cash. **PAC**

Tamed Demons and Magical Paintings

landscape and its soul when you go to Southeast Asia's other exotic places?
JG: I have discovered that we have to go beyond borders. We are all the same. We go through births, deaths, having children and grandchildren. I also realized that as we grow older, we are still kids.

SIM: What took you so long to come back to painting?
JG: It takes a while to tame the ego. With lesser ego, it is easier for the creative process to flow.

SIM: Did pottery tame your ego?
JG: Painting and pottery are not two different things. For me, they are equally important.

SIM: What is important to you nowadays?
JG: If I can make a painting that my grandson can relate to, I can say I am successful in delineating the world of magic, wonder, and innocence. I think I could do that kind of painting now. •

A FLAWLESS FACE FROM MAX FACTOR

Max Factor delivers another beauty breakthrough with Flawless Perfection Foundation, a patented two-step system designed to achieve that freshly applied flawless look that lasts twice as long. Incorporating a separate Skin Perfecting Complex and Colour Finish formula, this amazing, first-of-its-kind foundation system brings women the world over just two easy steps away from beauty perfection!

With its sensory micro-particles, the Skin Perfecting Complex smooths skin texture like a primer, minimizing the appearance of pores and reducing visible unevenness, making it ideal for normal to drier skin types. It also acts behind the scenes to minimize shine, thus addressing common concerns of combination and oilier skin types, as well. In addition, to keep oil and water off the coat, the system's Skin Perfecting Complex contains a flexible water-resistant polymer, an ingredient never used before in make-up, adding flexibility to the foundation while providing SPF 12 protection.

The second step is the Colour Finish, which contains specially coated pigments that resist fading, thus delivering a perfect natural colour and long-lasting coverage. Applied over the lightweight Skin Perfecting Complex, the Colour Finish effortlessly glides on, making it easier to achieve a light or heavy finish.

While most foundations have a texture that will enhance rather than hide the skin, there are still options for more coverage when you need it. Max Factor Flawless Perfection Foundation comes in Creamy Ivory, Sand, Natural, Golden and Bronze, is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation, and is available in leading department stores nationwide. •

HOW TO GET THE FLAWLESS LOOK

1. Max Factor's Skin Perfecting Complex works like a primer to smoothen and even out skin tone. Apply after your regular moisturizer to help the finish last for eight hours or more. Apply all over the face and under the eyes.

2. Apply the Colour Finish to even out skin tone and add natural coverage.

3. If you need more coverage, apply concealer after the colour finish.

4. Set with loose powder.

5. To make sure your makeup stays fresh, even with oily skin, simply dab with an oil blotter or facial tissue. •

The Way They Were

Another frozen snapshot from the fashion vortex that was the '80s: this time the motley crew that was the Bagets gang, back when they were unattached and still needed their parents' permission to go out on a date. Clockwise from top left: a sweet and svelte Nadia Montenegro, now former mayor Boy Asistio's *ka*-love team; virginal Janice de Belen (pre-"God was with us when we did it"); a tweetums Gretchen Barretto, way before she acquired a reputation as Tonyboy's dragon lady; a muscle-shirted Benedict Aquino (whatever happened to him?), teen dream Aga Muhlach still wearing his "*siete*" haircut from the electro-boogie classic "Campus Beat," and Albert Anido (of whom we have absolutely no recollection). Yep, them were the days... •

The FabulOUS GIRLS (from page 9)

her flawless skin, I was prepared for supermodel mode. As this was our first opportunity to actually talk, I expected her to be reserved, poised and *über* cool. Definite diva material—until she started apologizing for being late due to a delayed press conference and the difficulty of finding parking.

Driving herself, apologizing for lateness and lacking personal assistants (no diva entourage is complete without at least one)—so non-diva like! Persevering in my quest to unearth the hidden diva, I ask how she finds the newbies' performances to date. Without missing a beat, she gives a fair and well-thought-out analysis of the new girls' hosting skills—"They are flexible, energetic and absorb things quickly—sorry, no divas among them, either." Not to be defeated, I say, "Then that only leaves you as the diva?" Angel laughs, "I wish, but seriously, I am a klutz." *(Darn, foiled yet again!)*

Style: "I am a fashion sponge. I like to experiment, but I'm so not good at it so I always go back to what's basic. It works for me." (*Smart. You should never mess with a classic!)*

Vice: "Food! *(See's with chocolate almonds)*. But clothes would be a close second. I can't wait for a time when I can binge on that!" *(Starve, babe—that's my best shopping tip. Saves you money and keeps you Nicole Ritchie gaunt.)*

Comfort food: "Cream-based soups with bread and butter."

I wish: "I could learn how to cook. So when I am rich enough I can just stay home and cook." *(FYI, you can be poor and stay home and cook.)*

Funniest thing about me: "I am really gullible. People stare at me in a weird way when they realize the things I believe in." *(Scary.)*

On posing nude: "Yes, I've done it in Metro Magazine and for The Spa—in a tasteful way, and not to make people drool over me."

True confession: "I am not always confident with my body."

Would you rather be fat or ugly? "If I had to choose—I know 'healthier' people who are not happy with their bodies and who struggle with their weight. As for ugly, I was an ugly duckling, dark with bad hair until I got discovered for a shampoo commercial."*(Lesson being, there is a swan in all of us?)*

Dream gig: "My own travel show."

What makes me nervous: "When people are breathing down my neck."

Most significant moment: "My firstborn's birth."

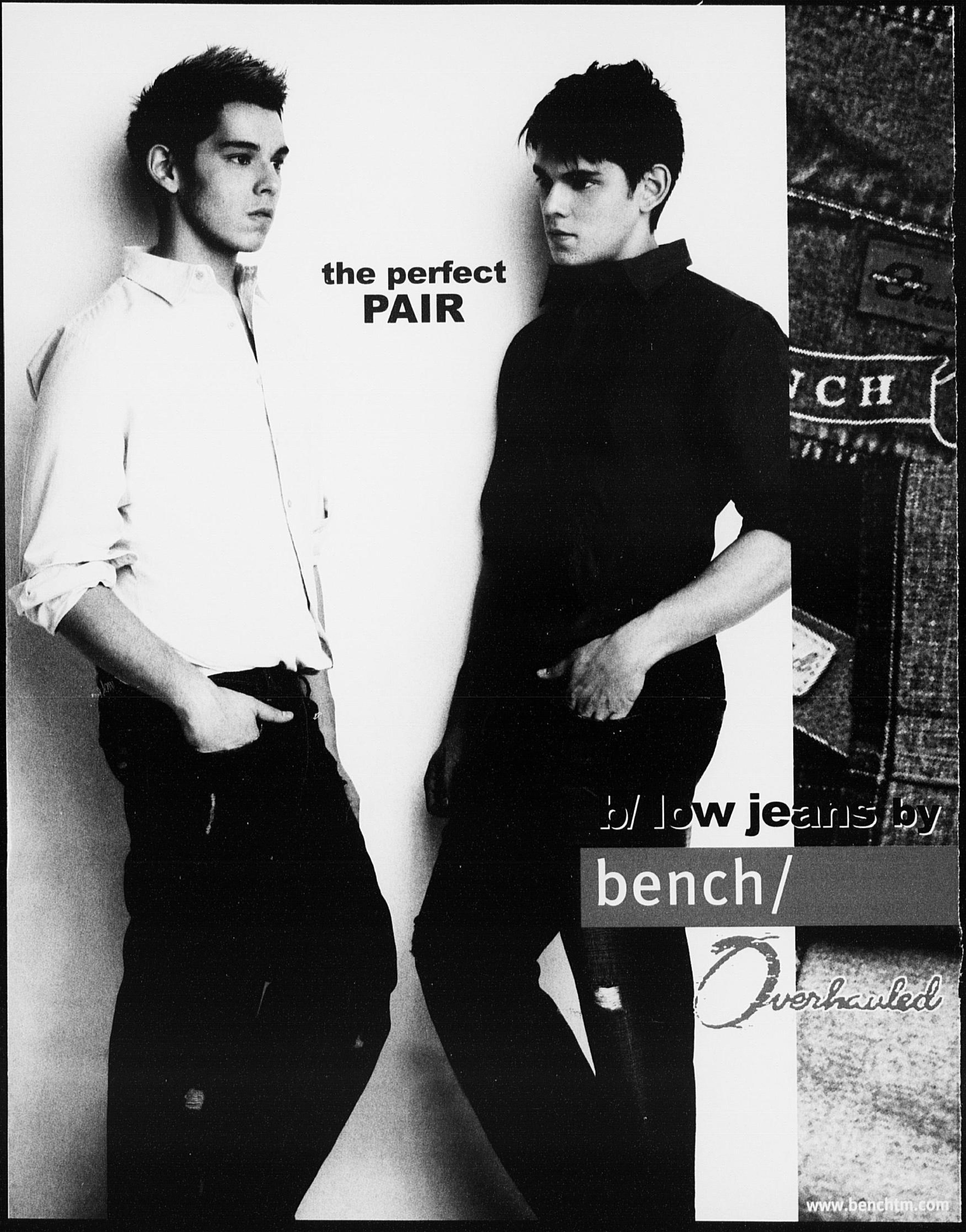
Three words to describe yourself: "Boring, childlike, and I think I am an old soul." *(That's more then three words...)*

Last word: "Looking at my second born the first time. I had a really difficult pregnancy, and I did not want to see my second daughter when she was born. I kept my back turned away from her, but I was forced to breastfeed her. So I had to turn around to face her. When I saw her face the first time, I melted. I wanted to go down on my knees for having had any negative thoughts about her. I can't believe I'm telling you this." *(Neither can I, but thanks!)* •

Cheska

Angel

Iya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